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Some Recent Work of Holabird & Root, Architects

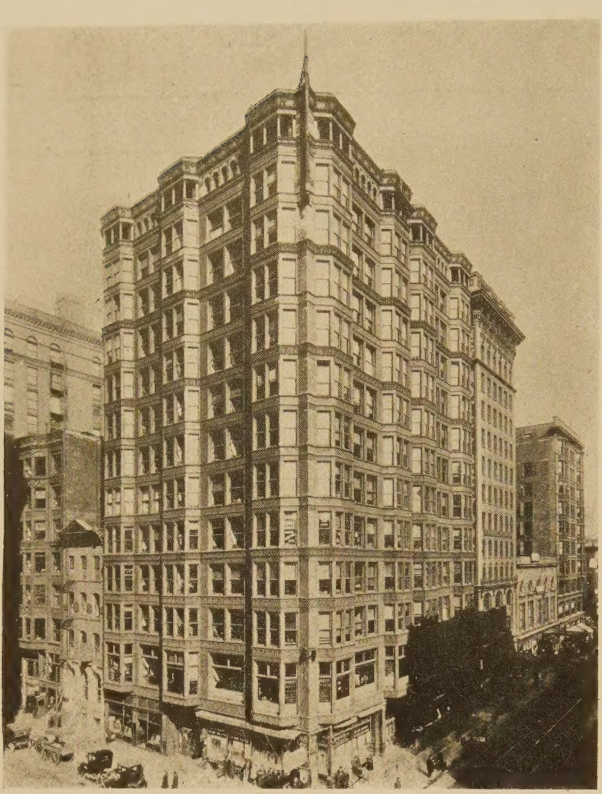
By *Earl H. Reed, Jr.*

DURING the past five years the Middle West and Chicago, the cradle of metal-skeleton construction in the late eighties, have been the scene of the erection of a series of commercial edifices of very unusual architectural interest. Clean and urban structures of arresting present-day character, usually of stone, have made their appearance in our streets, one close upon another. They are bold in mass, delicate in detail, when it appears at all, and they take their places serenely and assuredly as if by some right inherent in their qualities of useful comeliness. Above all, they are distinguished by a fine regard for relationships of grays, sculptural and chromatic. A dozen or more, all by the young-old firm of Holabird & Root, stand out in my mind, large and small, complete and unfinished, each as a glorification in architecture of the American commercial spirit at its best. In these buildings the forms of yesterday and to-day are indiscriminately used with a mastery of proportion and good taste which delights the passer-by. Nothing so truly significant has happened here since the pre-Columbian Exposition days which witnessed the coming to our streets of the epoch-making works of that mighty band which surrounded Louis Sullivan.

Holabird & Root's buildings are carefully studied, they are built with incredible speed and finished technic, and they have been planned with meticulous regard for those who are to make use of them. They also bear evidence of a deep knowledge of the lore of architecture. They are, in short, the product of a developed and experienced organization completely dominated by highly trained designer-architects, men whose minds are in full rhythm with the commercial forces of present-day America, and keenly tuned to meet their every need. The illustrations which accompany this appreciation will convey more adequately than words the power and charm of these buildings and their progressive development, and will also make clear, I think, the high place this firm has already assumed in that advanced group of contemporary designers which has so enhanced the fame of American architecture throughout the world since the judgment of the Tribune Tower competition.

A review of Holabird & Root's accomplishment thus far would be incomplete without at least an attempted résumé of present-day tendencies in design, since they relate so definitely to it. That America is fully entered upon a fruitful era of progress in architecture is evidenced on all sides. Her architects no longer hesitate to accept the challenge of her engineers who have boldly and triumphantly developed things structural and mechanical to their present high degree of perfection. Ideals of a new beauty have to do with mass-structure-use expressiveness, motion, and speed, the fine symmetry of machines, geometrical abstractions, and now the allurements of obliquely apposed surfaces, are abroad in the land to the utter neglect of meaningless historical adornment. The promise of the times is so great that soon, surely, it cannot be said with such crushing truth as formerly that our steel buildings are only beautiful in their incompleteness.

The pattern of achievement in American architecture is intricate and multi-hued and the origins of these tendencies which promise so much are difficult to trace. Many believe that they come as the fruition of the seeds planted by Sullivan in the afore-mentioned late eighties, and that the World's Columbian Exposition, in white and classic glory, blighted the lusty young plant of vitalized Romanticism. But it is to be seen quite clearly that Sullivan's influence, orientalized and simplified into abstractions of form, as expressed in the numerous works of Frank Lloyd Wright in Chicago of the

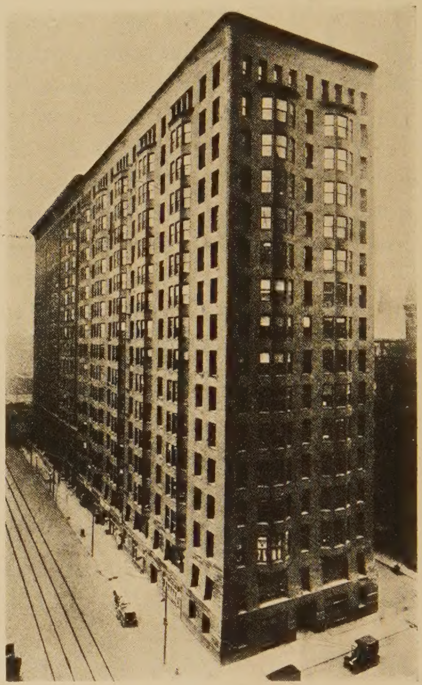


early nineteen hundreds, and the German publications of his drawings at a later date, fired the minds of a group of form-hungry continental designers, fatigued by tradition, whose enthusiasm developed it into a force known as the "Modern Movement" and now imported under foreign trade mark. It is a phenomenon strongly resembling the thriving industry which was observable only a few years ago in connection with the roe of the sturgeon taken from Lake Michigan's blue water—to be smoked and cured on her shores, exported to Russia and distributed to the world from canneries on the Volga! But the adventurous spirit of the buildings illustrated in these pages is so suavely classic in its expression that grouping and dismissal simply as "modern" or "futuristic" is quite inadequate, for their calm masses do not betray the slightest trace of strain after sensational effect or cheap novelty. Each one is rather the simple expression of a given grouping of practical necessities, commercial, financial, legal, engineering, or what not, in commonsense construction and truly lovely exterior form and material. They are individual and inevitable in their flavor—in common with all fine works of art.

The dominating spirits of the firm of Holabird & Root are John A. Holabird and John W. Root, the announcement of whose partnership two years ago as successors to the old established firm of Holabird & Roche was of more than usual interest, because of the fact that the fathers of these men, William Holabird and John W. Root, had each made prodigious contributions in his day to the advancement of American architecture in the Middle West.

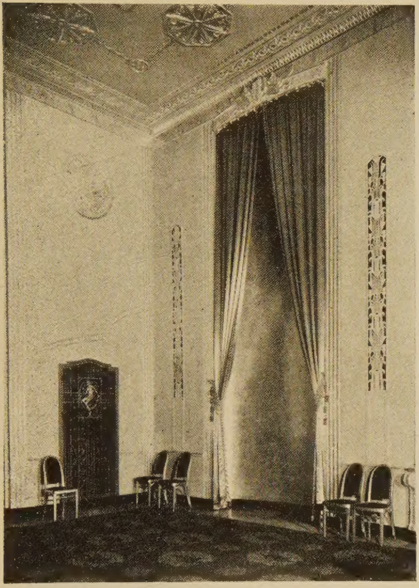
About forty years ago the then young firm of Holabird & Roche completed the Tacoma Building, generally conceded to be the first structure in the world to be constructed in the metal-skeleton manner. William Holabird, West Pointer and man of force and daring, and Martin Roche, the sensitive artist, composed the original firm. About the same time John W. Root, brilliant designer and inventor of new forms of foundation adapted to Chicago's peculiar sub-soil conditions, and associated with Daniel Burnham, was engaged in the creation of a series of buildings which culminated in the Romanesque Art Institute and the very unusual Monadnock Building of mass-structure interest and little detail. Root met an untimely death just before the World's Fair, but Holabird and Roche produced, during the years that followed, a great number of important structures distinguished by boldness and economy of constructive method, rapidity and soundness of execution, and sympathetic adaptation of the motives of the past to the needs of that era. The Marquette Building, the City Hall and County buildings, the Uni-

The Tacoma Building built in Chicago, 1888. Holabird & Roche, Architects

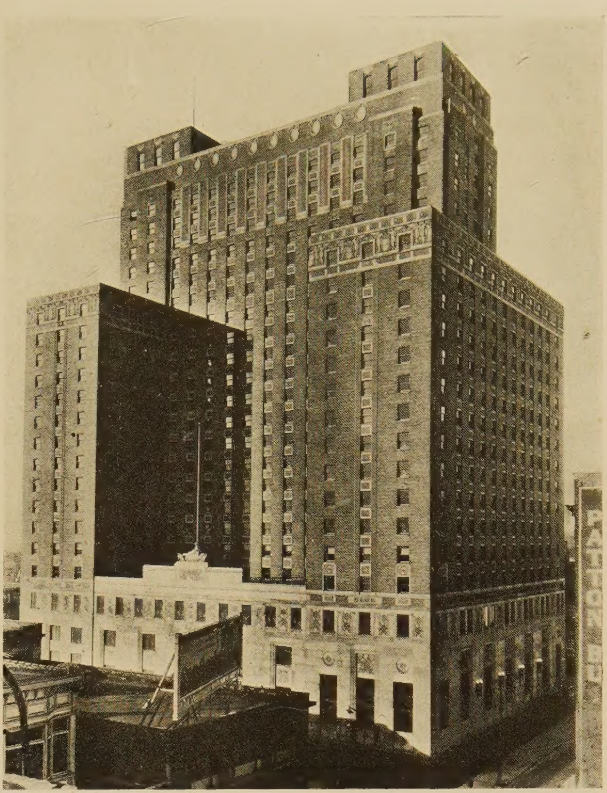


The Monadnock Building, Chicago, built in the nineties. Burnham & Root, Architects versity Club, the Monroe Building, and the La Salle Hotel are typical productions among many. The present young members entered the great organization, which had developed through the years, in 1913; William Holabird and Martin Roche having both since passed away, the name was changed to Holabird & Root in 1927.

Their present organization is one of the most efficient and highly developed in the country, and consists of over two hundred members housed in different portions of "333 North Michigan." Experienced technicians, long associated with the old firm and accustomed to dealing with problems connected with every variety of work, form its basis; Holabird & Root, for instance, having done their own mechanical and structural engineering for many years. Now sculptural studies relating to problems of decoration and mass development are also carried on in a special studio with the assistance of Alvin Meyer. Lately a large part of the interior decoration of Holabird & Root's buildings has been handled directly, this having been found essential in order to secure unity of spirit throughout. The room treatments of the Woman's Club are witness, I think, to the successful outcome of this experiment, all the interior accessories having been designed or selected through the firm's own decorative staff headed by Johns Hopkins.



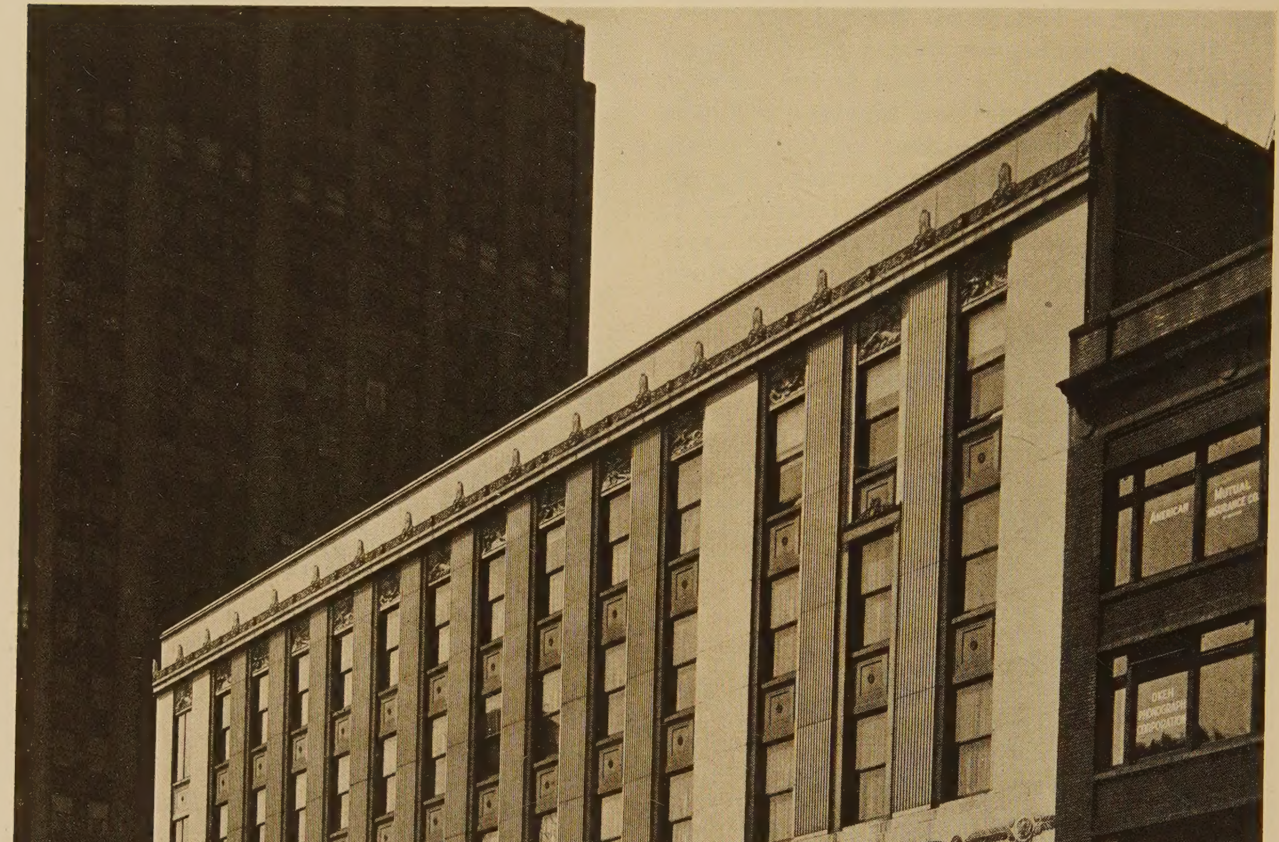
Lobby in Hotel Schroeder—an interior which, starting with Adam inspiration, shows the beginning of a transition



Hotel Schroeder, Milwaukee. Holabird & Roche, Architects

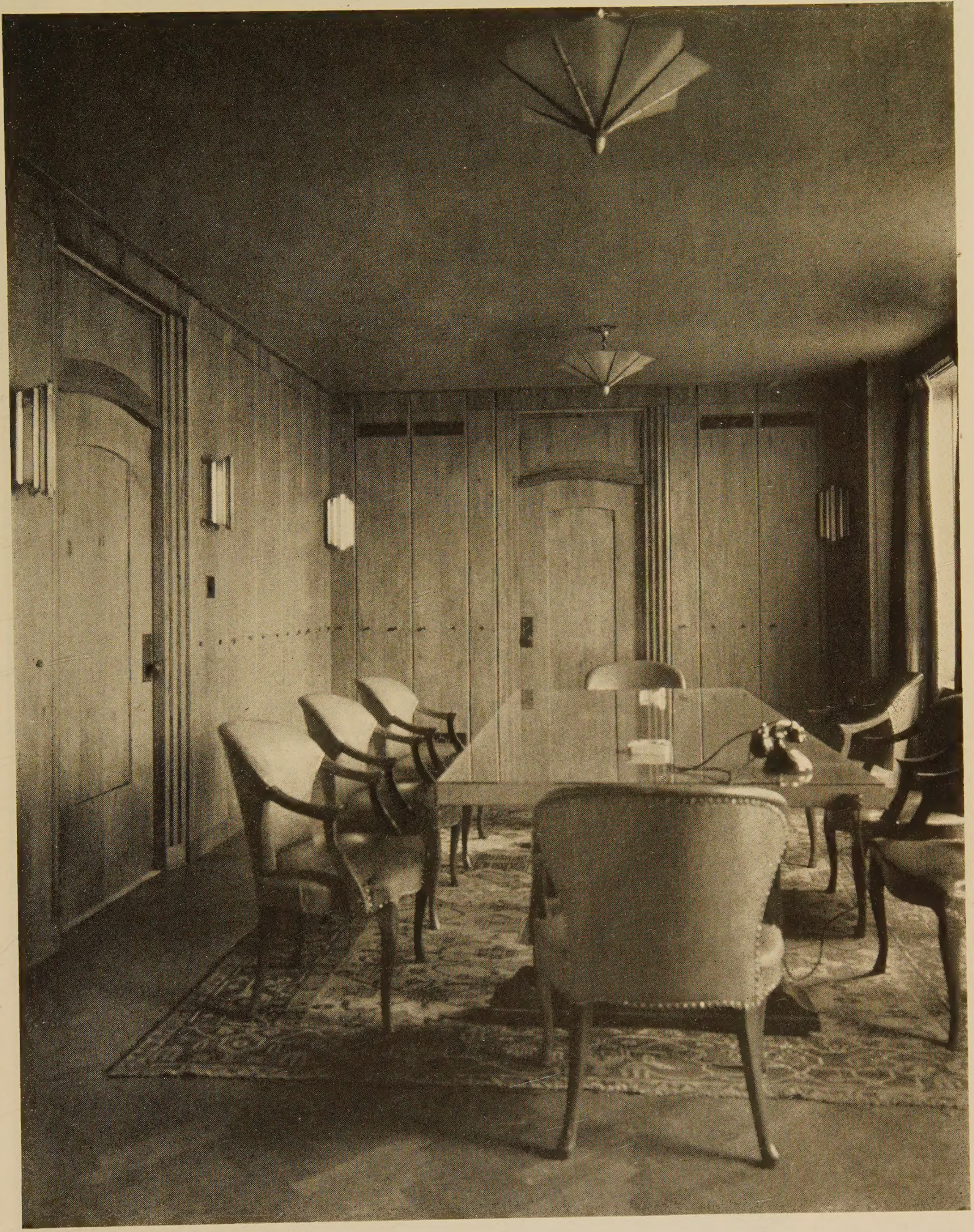
These buildings, of such marked personal character, are the astonishing result of a most unusual and sympathetic collaboration of diverse talents organized and directed at all times by the two active partners. All projects when formulated with the clients in their general economic, æsthetic, and utilitarian aspects, go to the table of R. M. Cabeen, where they are defined in plan and section with particular reference to construction and utility. Often during this period and always following it, they receive the skilful attention of Gilbert Hall, whose delightful, rapidly made pencil perspectives are now becoming well known. Each problem is most painstakingly considered, no possibilities are untried, and when the best has been selected it is developed with great care by these men under the eyes of Messrs. Root and Holabird, whose offices are conveniently adjacent. Assisting in this preliminary process is a group of selected men who also aid in the development of the detail, a difficult and time-consuming process all essential to the success of work of this type. Everywhere in its progress through the drafting-room, specification, contract, and supervision stages, these buildings are handled with rigid routine, precision, and skill and with a speed beyond belief. The administration of the work during its later stages is carried on under the direct supervision of Horatio B. Hackett. As the final product takes form in the street, it always remains a subject for study and possible improvement by all concerned.

Prediction of any sort is risky, yet I do not hesitate to express my conviction that one or several buildings by Holabird & Root will be remembered like Burnham & Root's Monadnock, as a marker of progress and excellence in the annals of American architecture. These partners, finely educated and forceful, have discovered the secret of imparting the blithe touch of beauty to tremendously commercial things, and are, besides, launched in full pursuit of the elusive æsthetic answer to American steel-building construction.



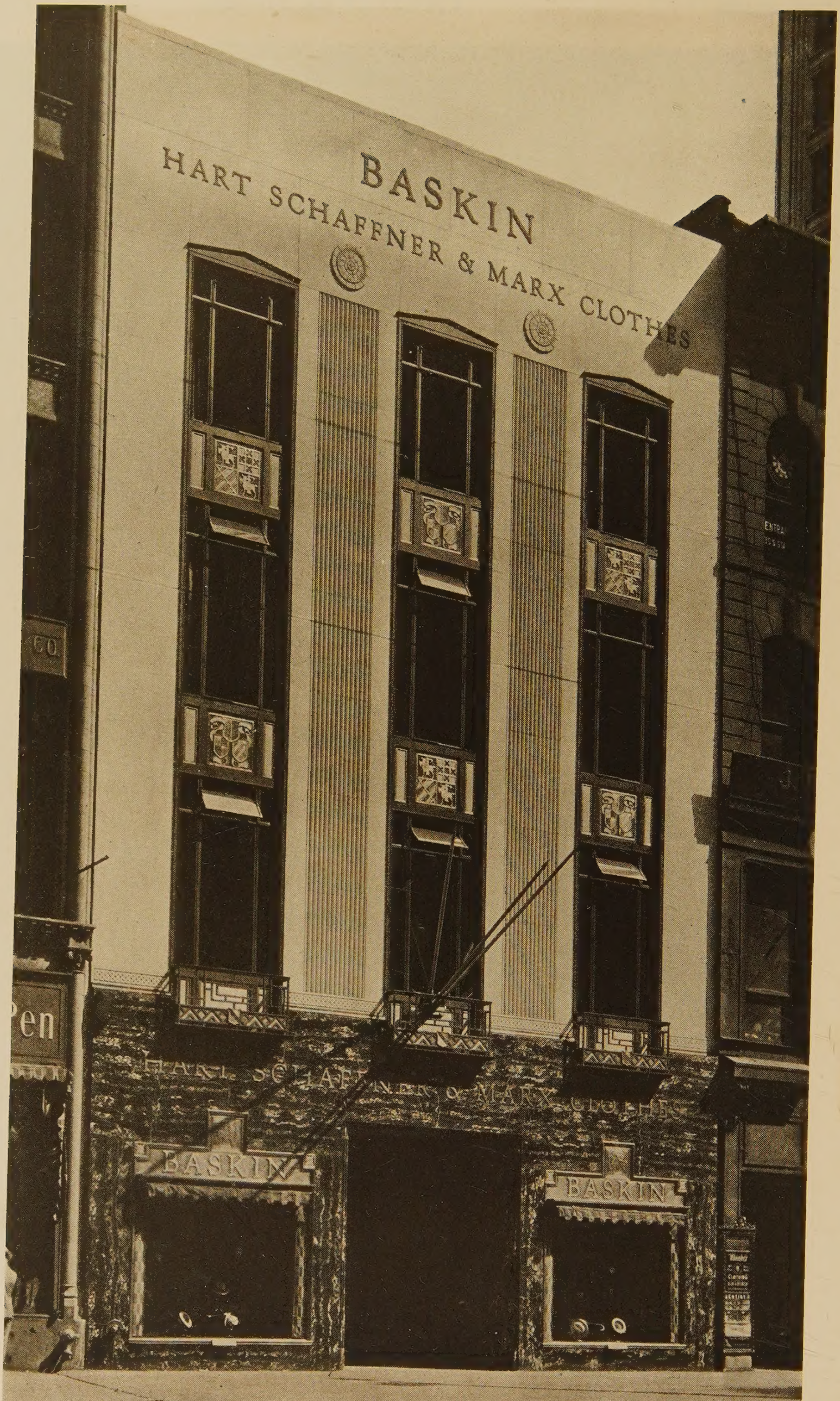
Henry Fuermann & Sons

The Tobey Building, North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, of marble, metal, and cast stone.
Holabird & Roche, Architects

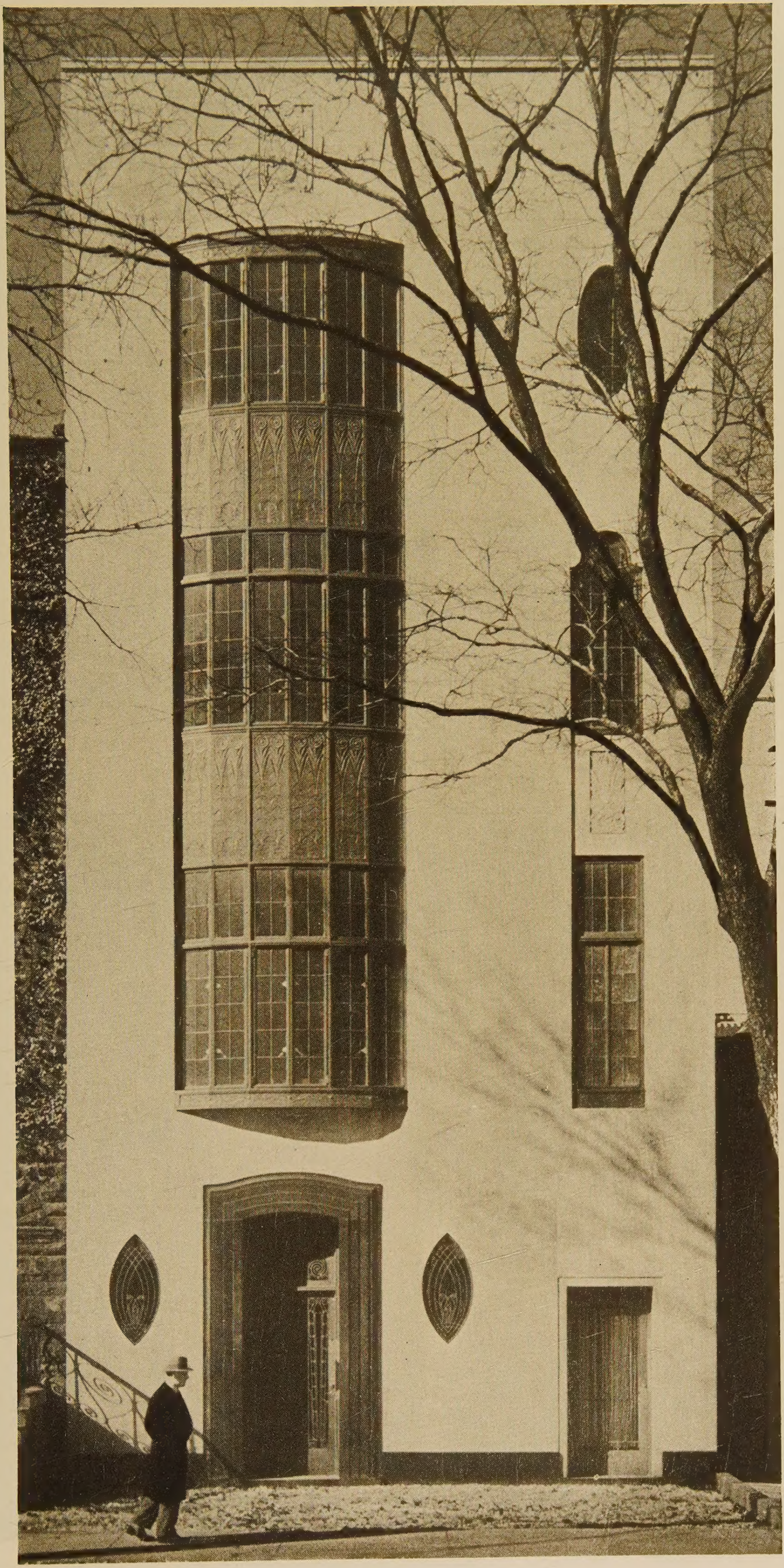


Tebbs & Knell, Inc.

The conference-room of Holabird & Root, Architects, 333 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, sheathed in butternut



Baskin Store Building, Chicago. Holabird & Roche, Architects. The façade is of cast stone, marble, and polychrome iron



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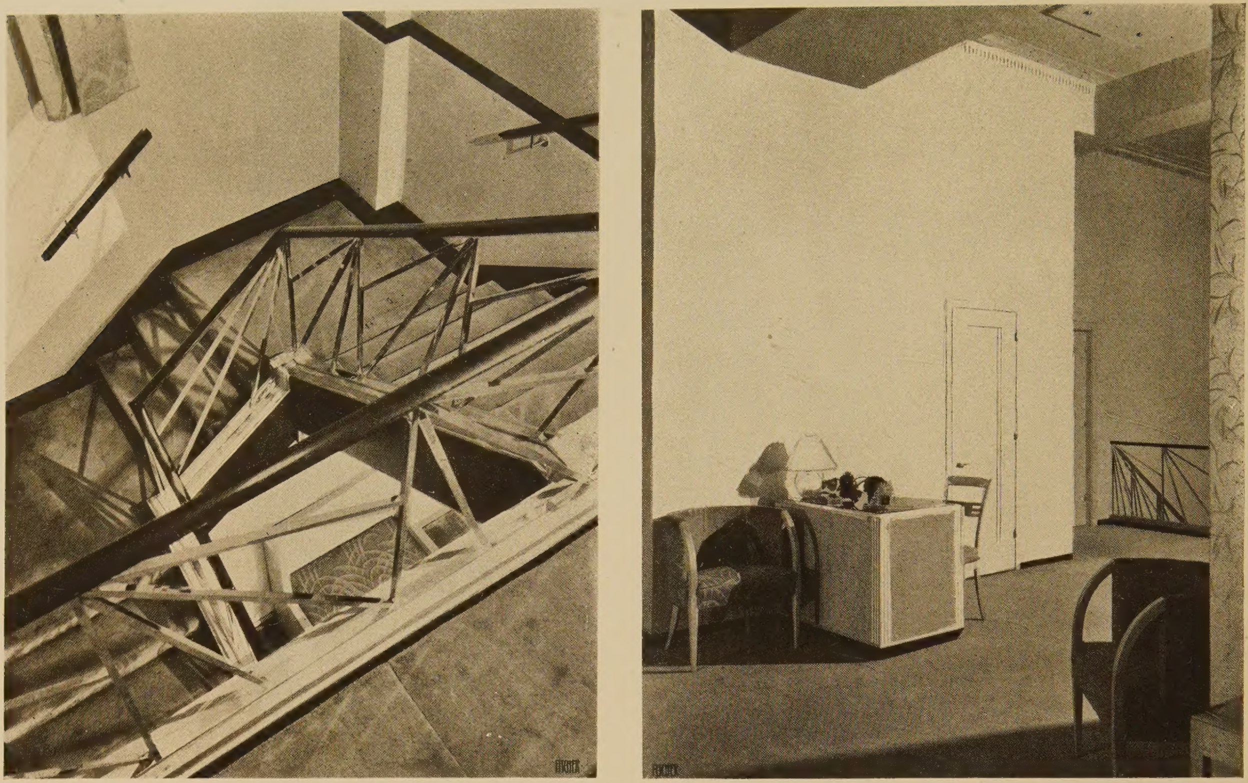
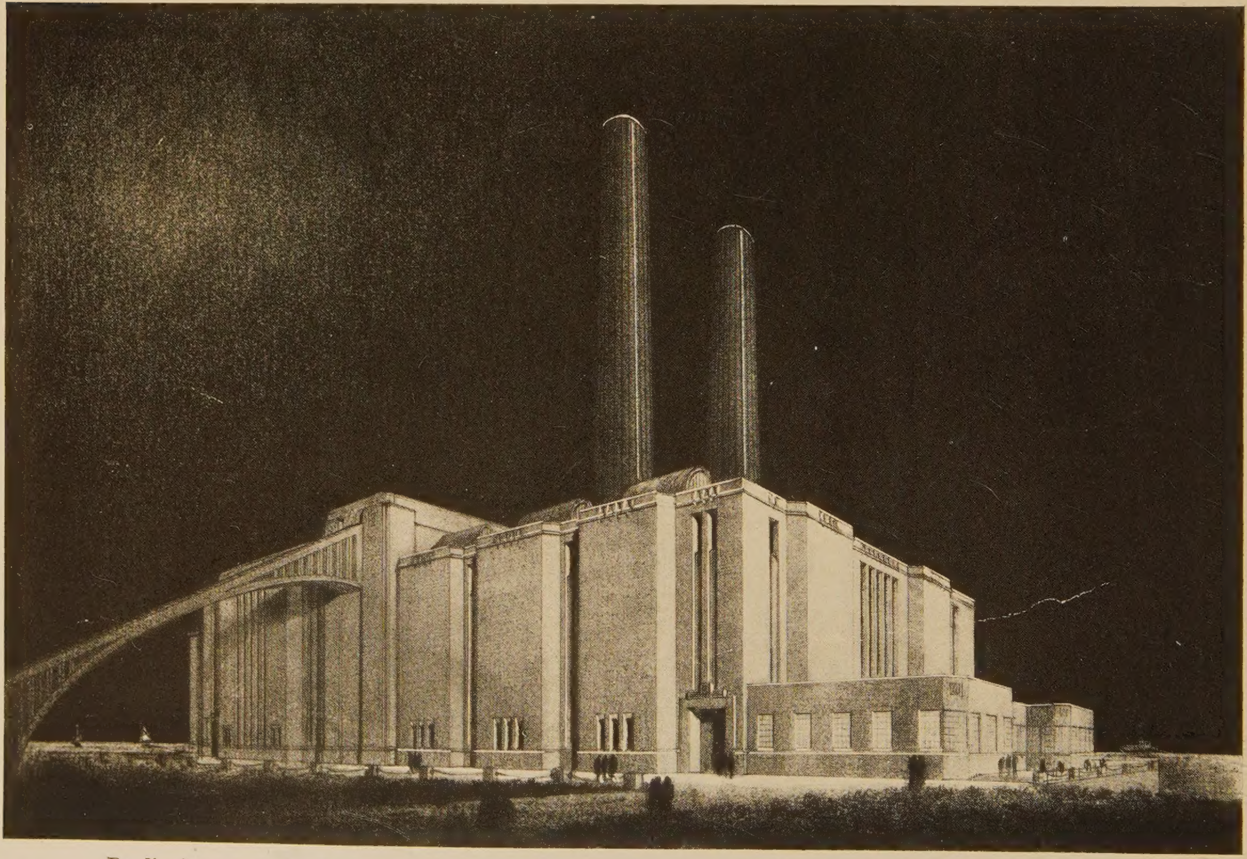
Russell Residence, Astor Street, Chicago. Holabird & Root, Architects. The bay is of lead work

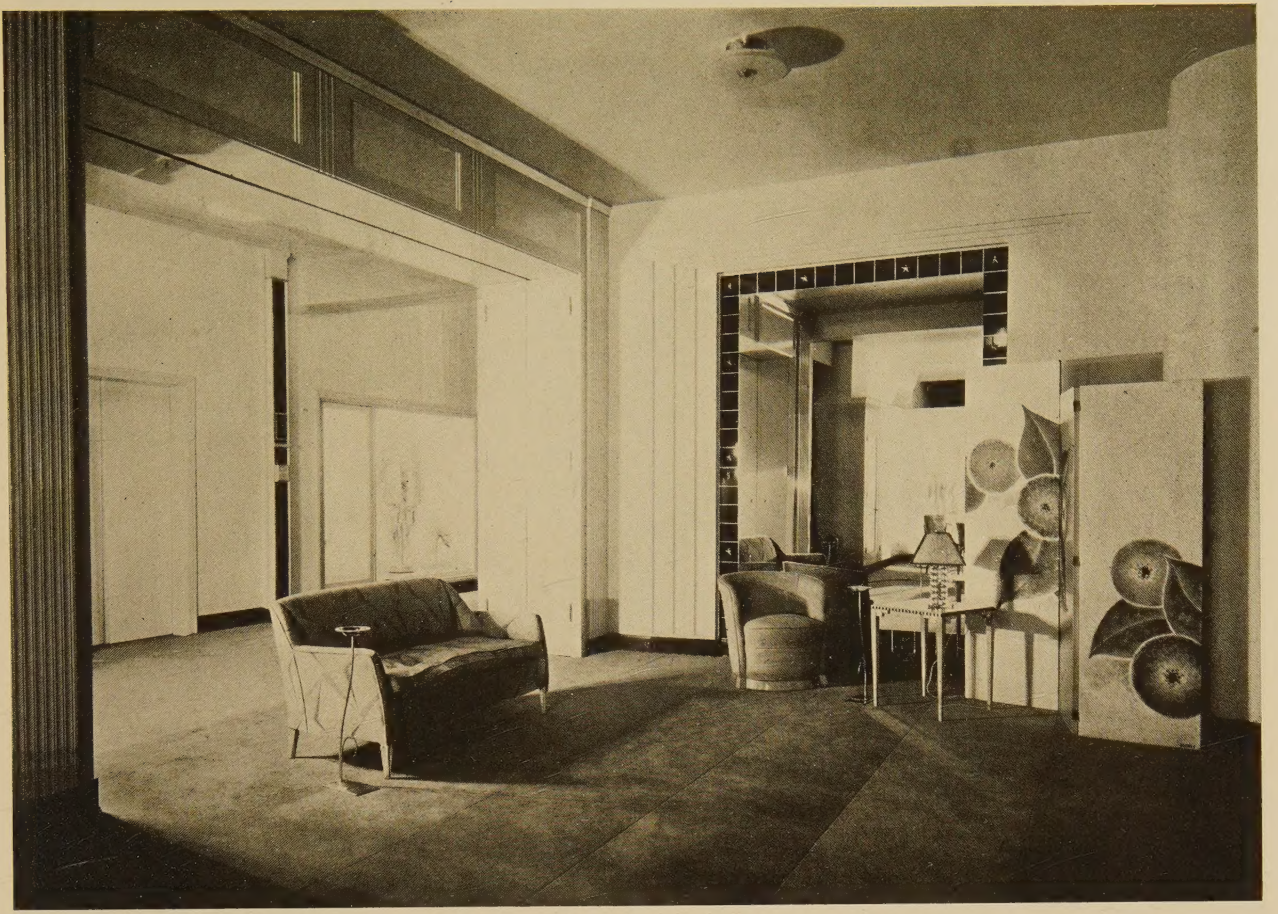


Photographs by Sigurd Fischer

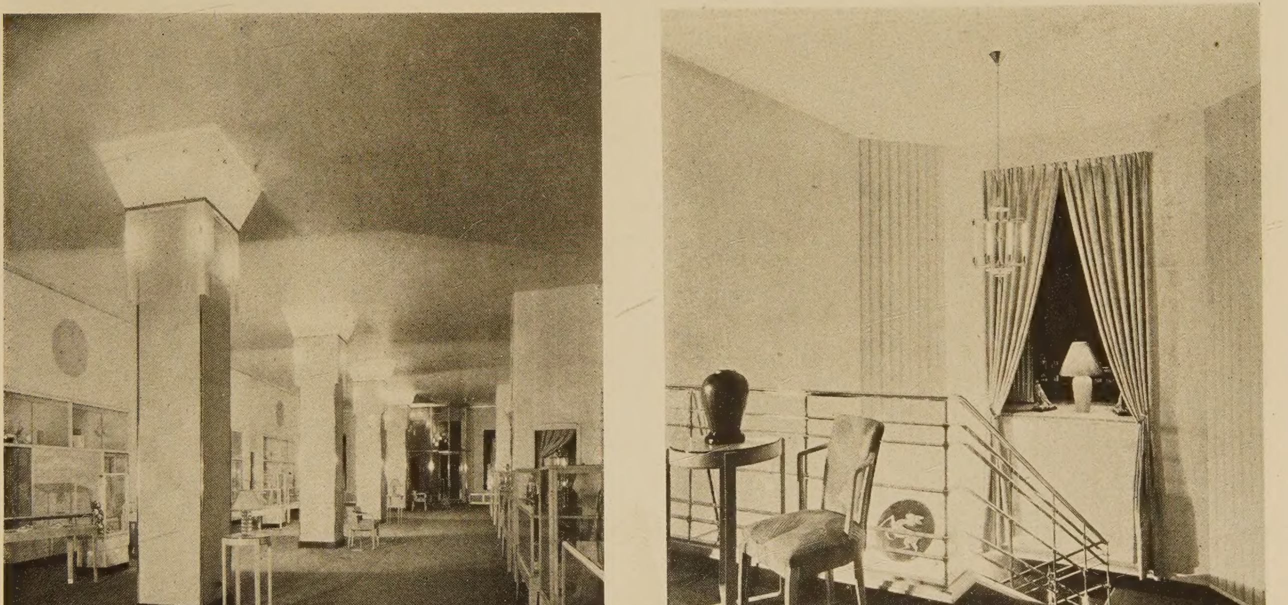
Interior details of the Rena Hartman Store, Chicago. Holabird & Root, Architects



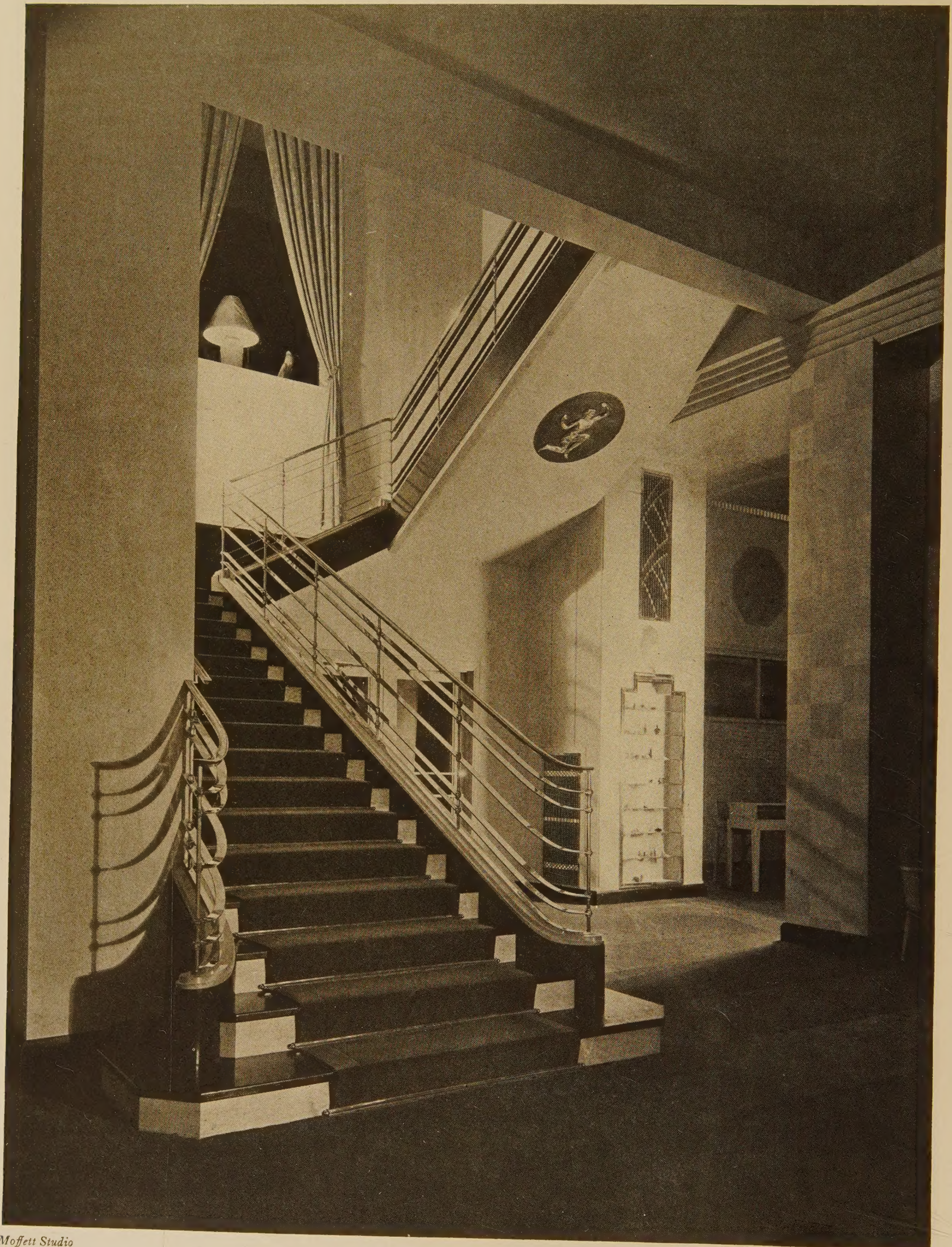
Preliminary study for a power house. Drawn by Gilbert Hall. Holabird & Root, Architects



Photographs by Moffett Studio

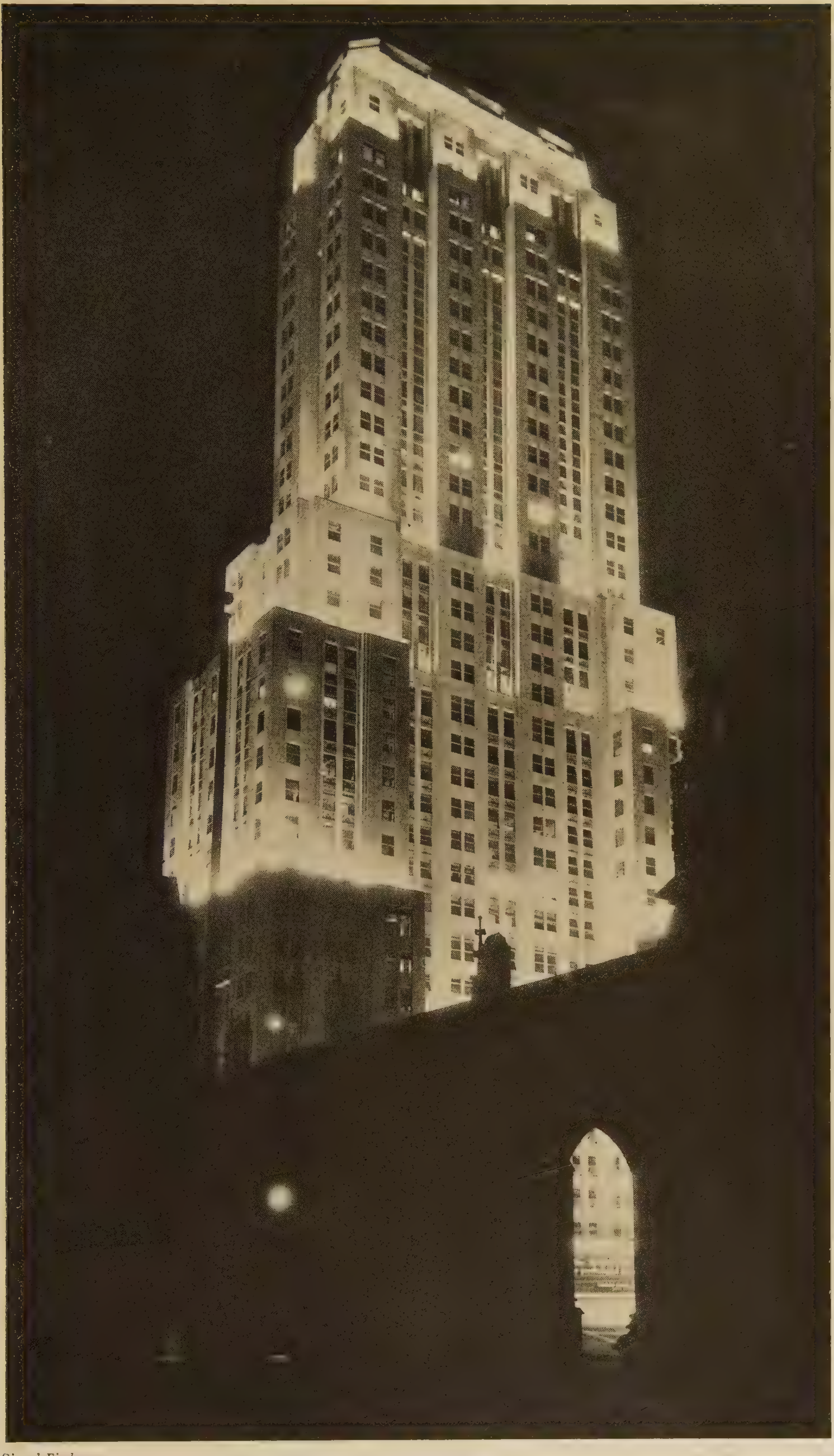


Details of "Saks Fifth Avenue," Chicago. Holabird & Root, Architects



Moffett Studio

Stairway, "Saks Fifth Avenue," Chicago. Holabird & Root, Architects. Chromium plate, natural maple, pale peach walls, and deep rose carpet indicate the color combination



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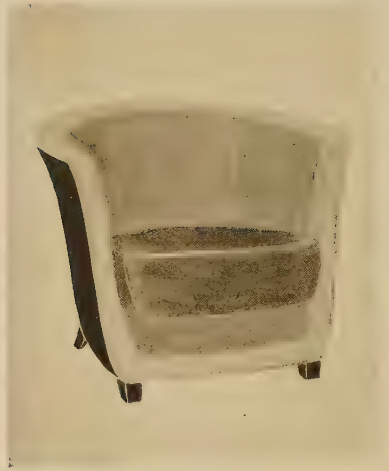
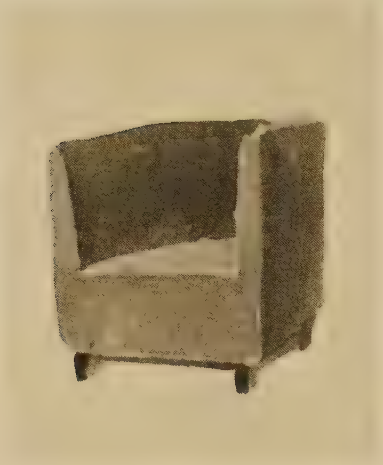
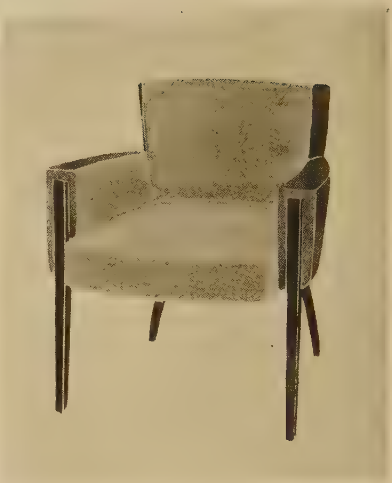
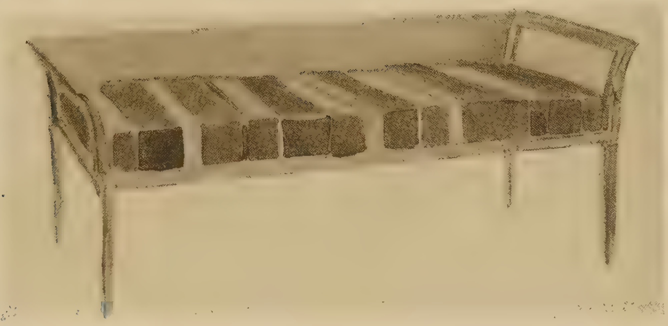
Palmolive Building at night from approximately the same position as that shown in the daylight picture opposite





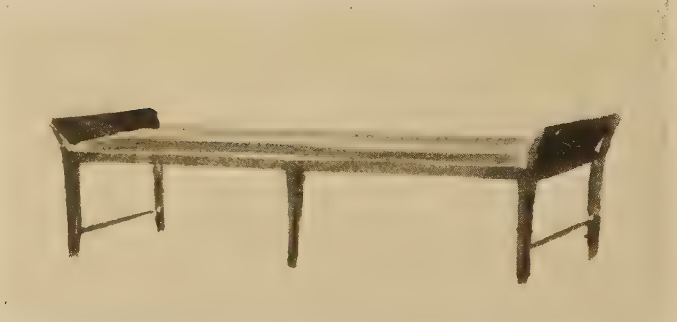


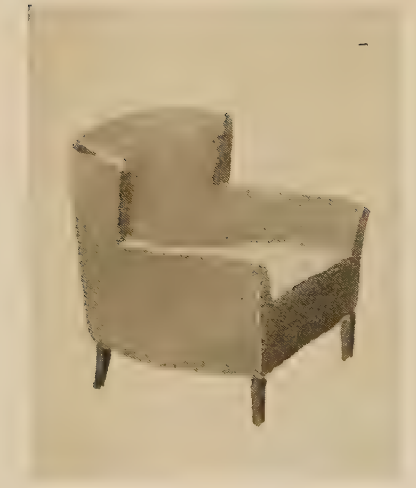


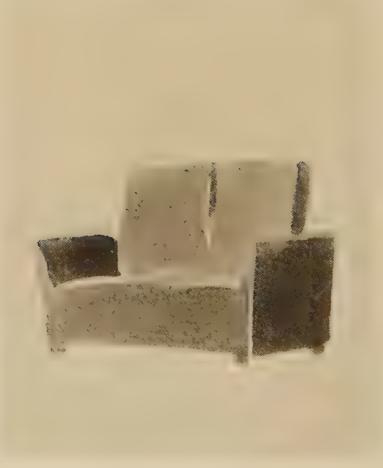
Studies in water-color for furniture to harmonize with various architectural interiors

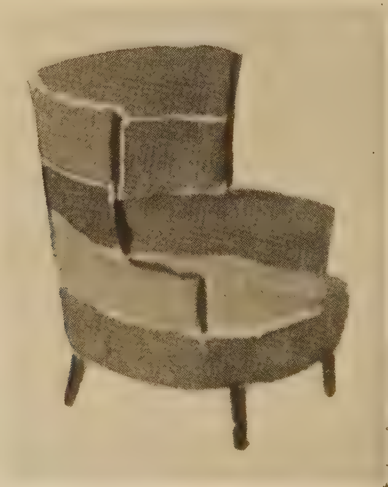
Holabird & Root, Architects.

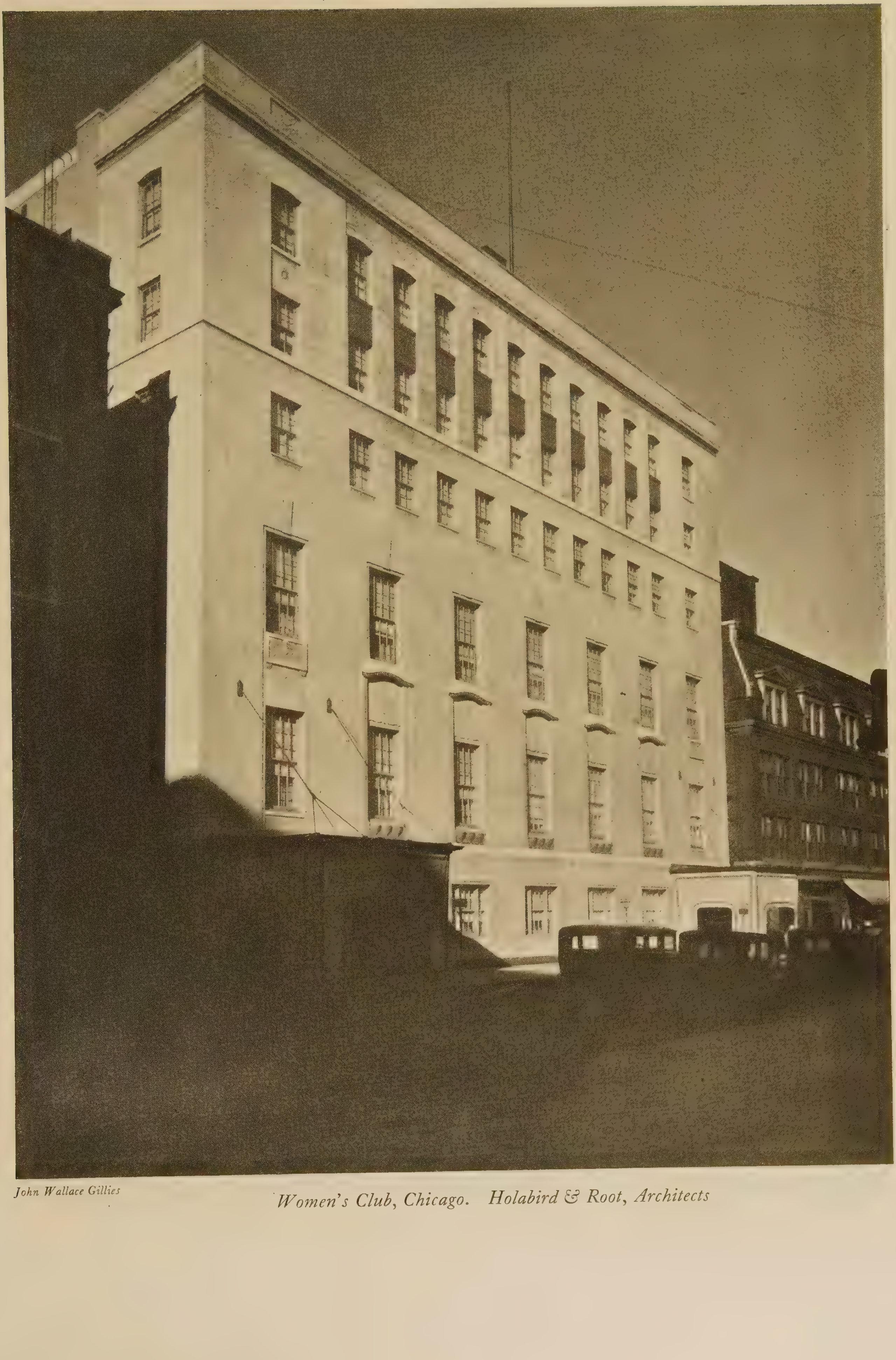
Drawings by H. Bartsch











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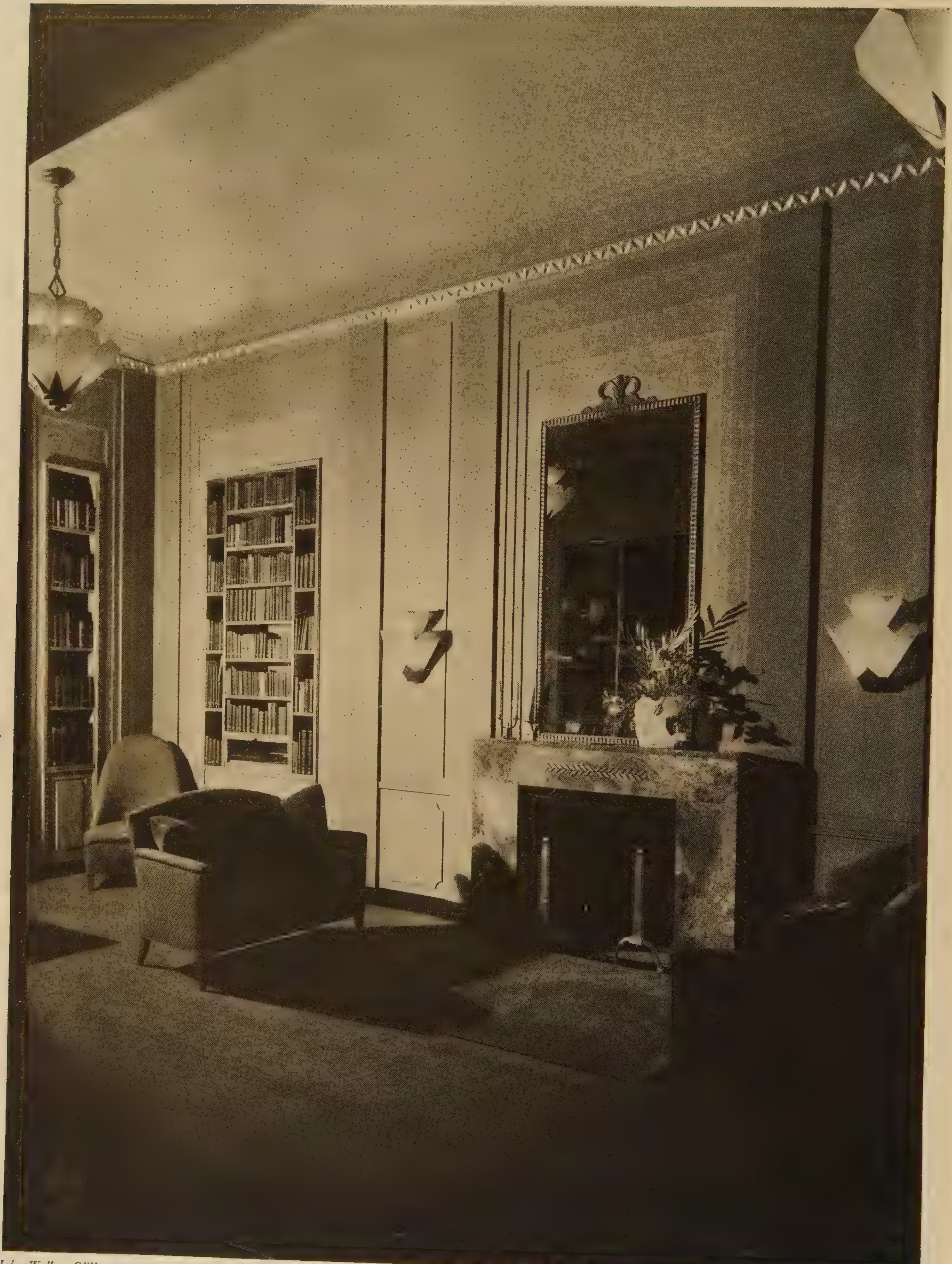
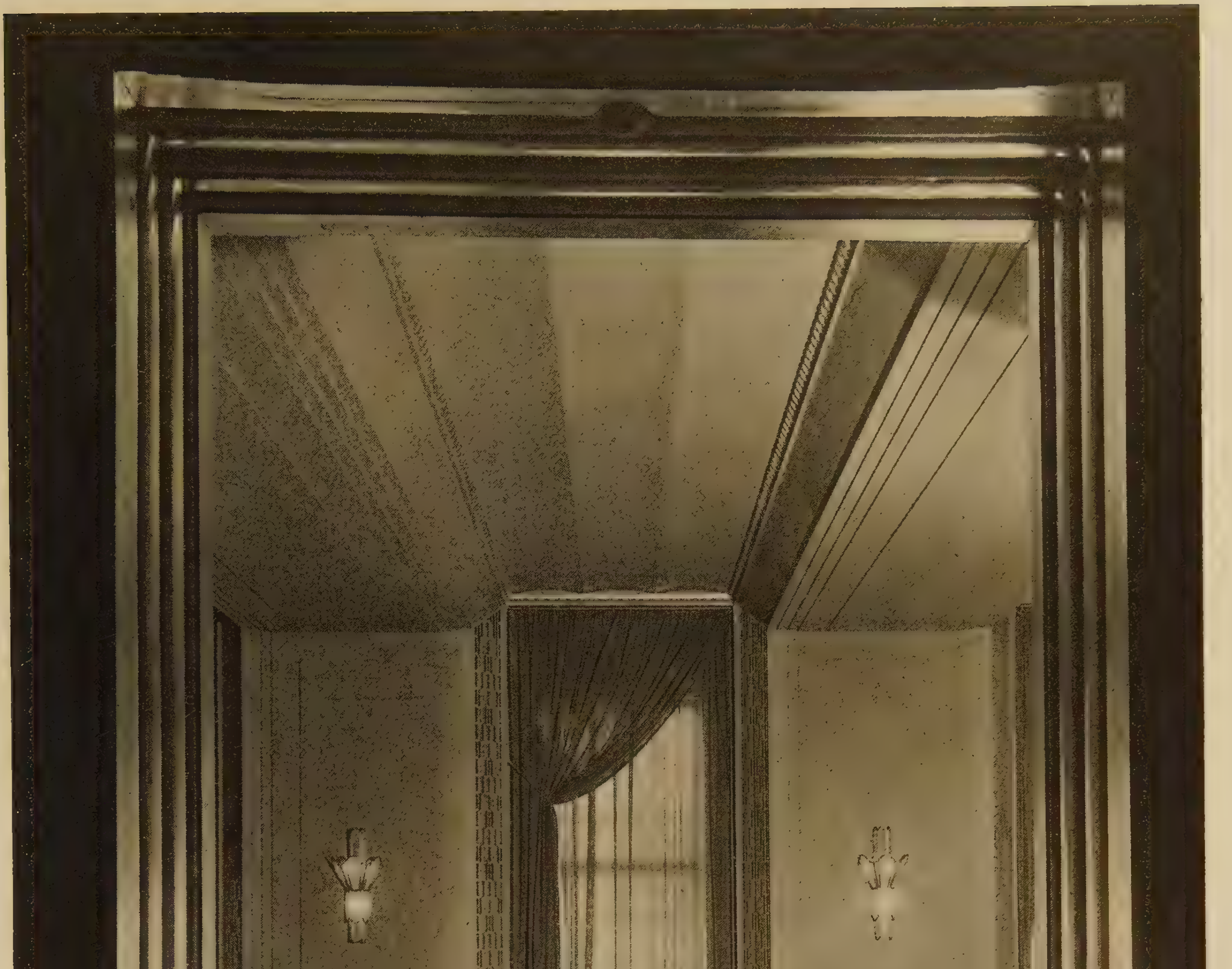
Women's Club, Chicago. Holabird & Root, Architects



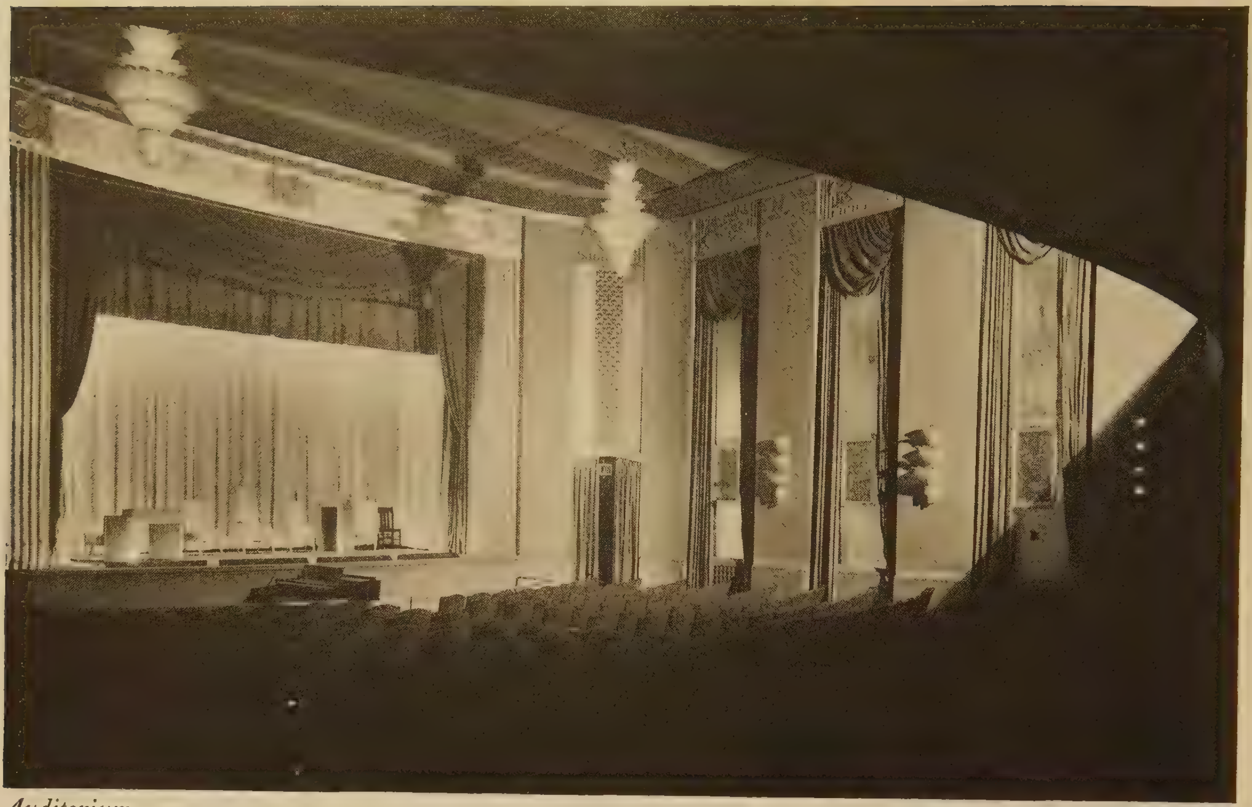
John Wallace Gillies

The library, Women's Club, Chicago. Holabird & Root, Architects

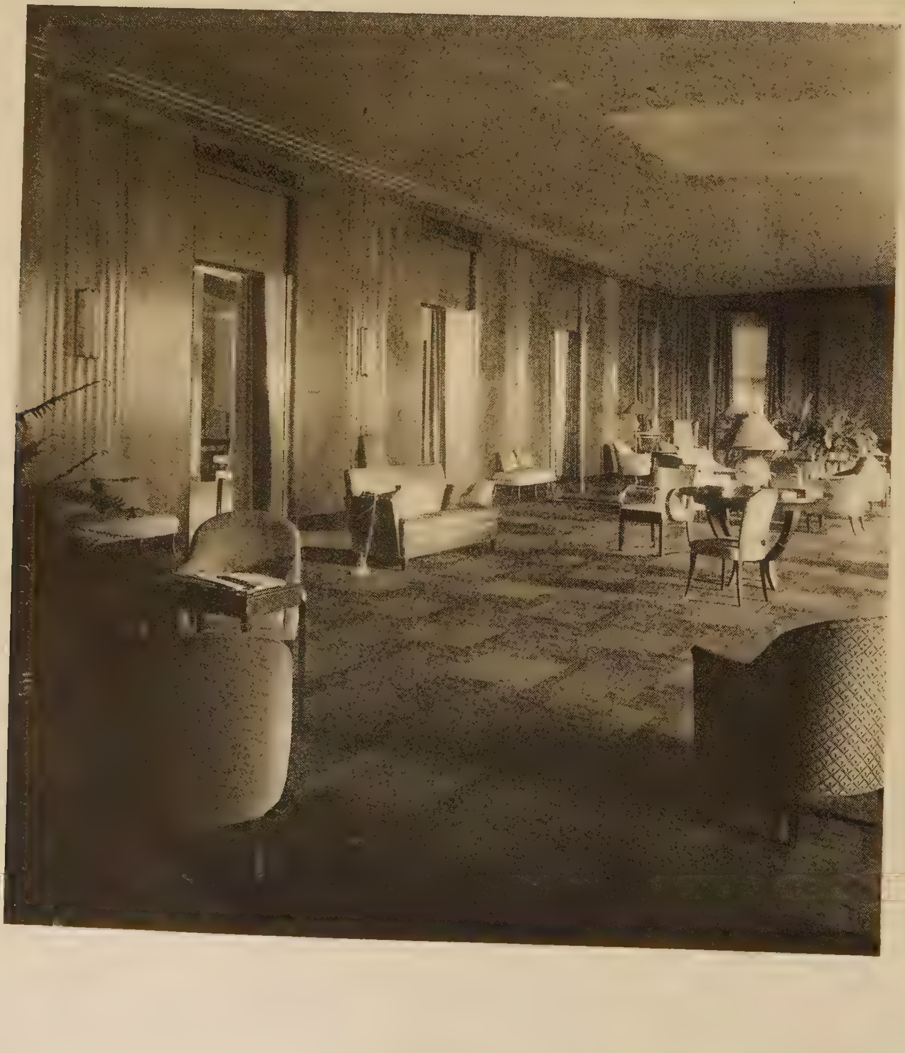


John Wallace Gillies

Dining-room, Women's Club, Chicago. Holabird & Root, Architects

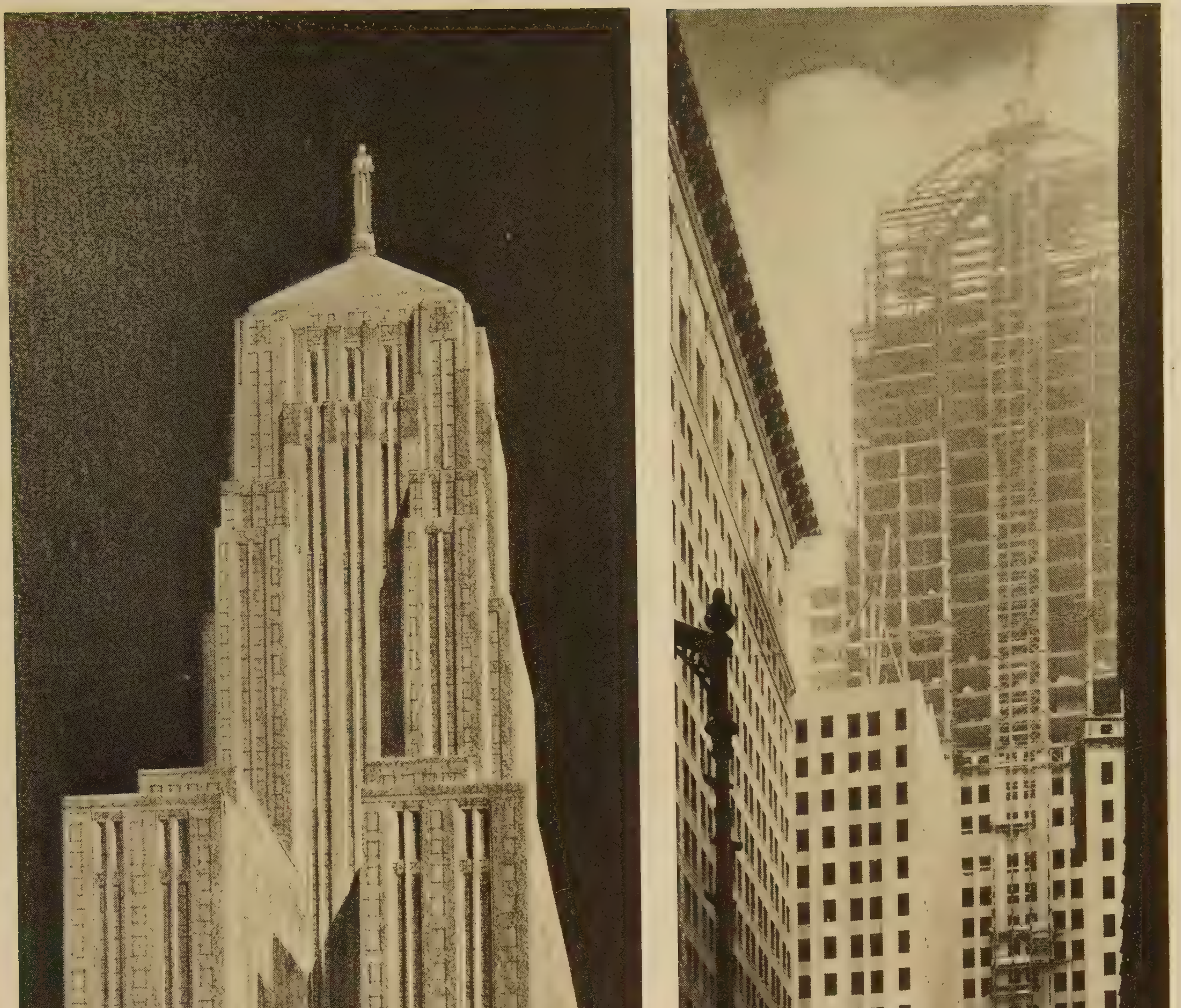


Auditorium, Women's Club, Chicago



The lounge, Women's Club, Chicago. Holabird & Root, Architects

Photographs by John Wallace Gillies



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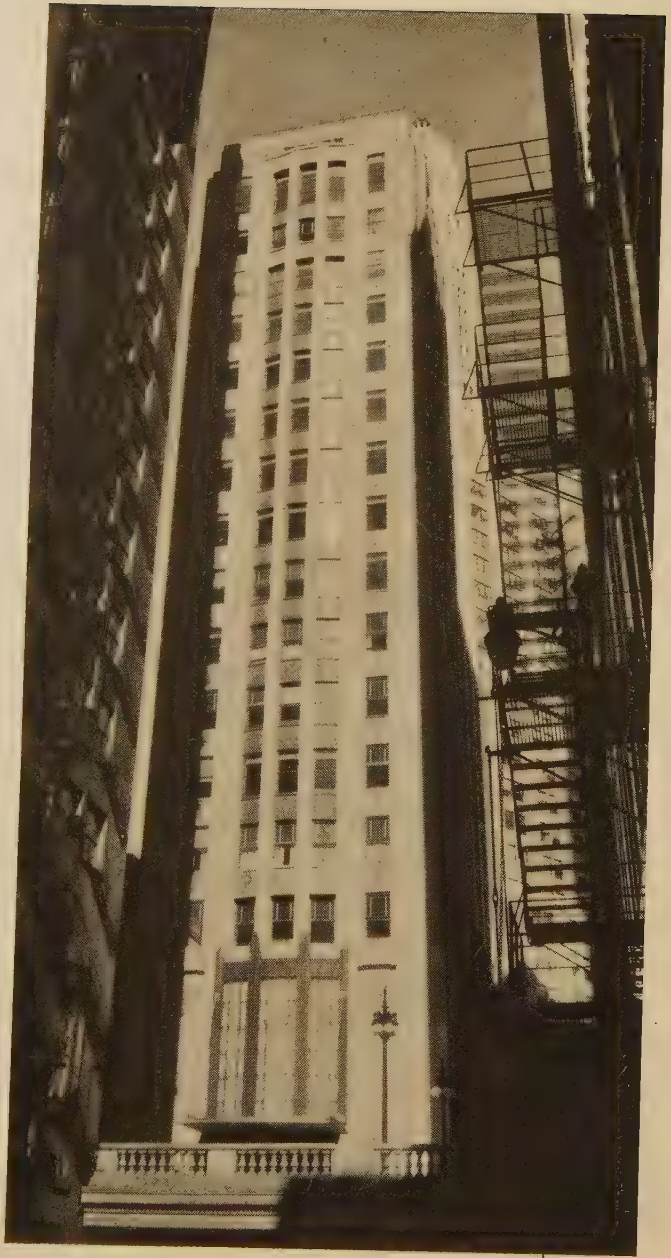
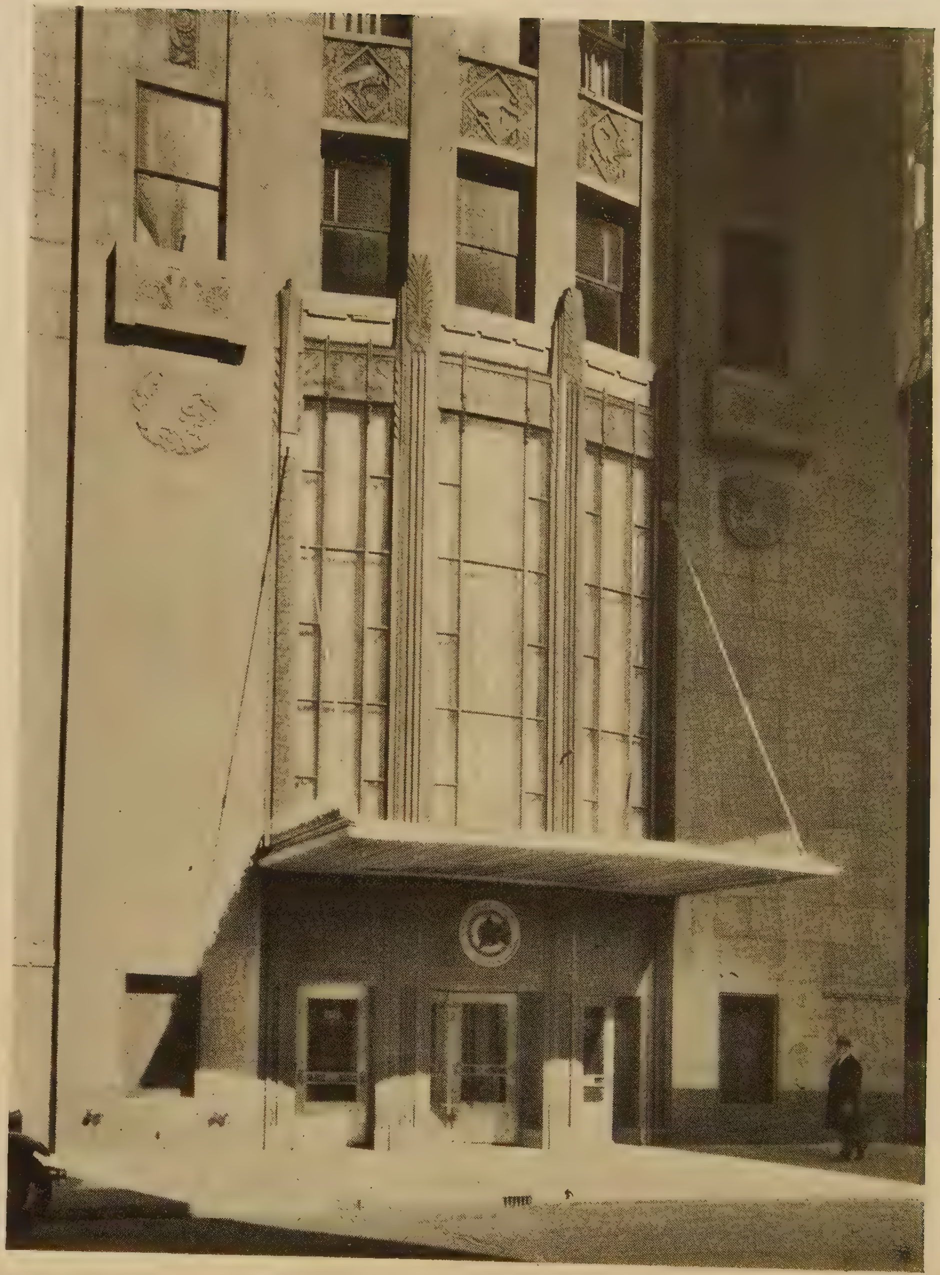
Chicago Board of Trade Building. Holabird & Root, Architects. Perspective drawing by Gilbert Hall, and progress photograph

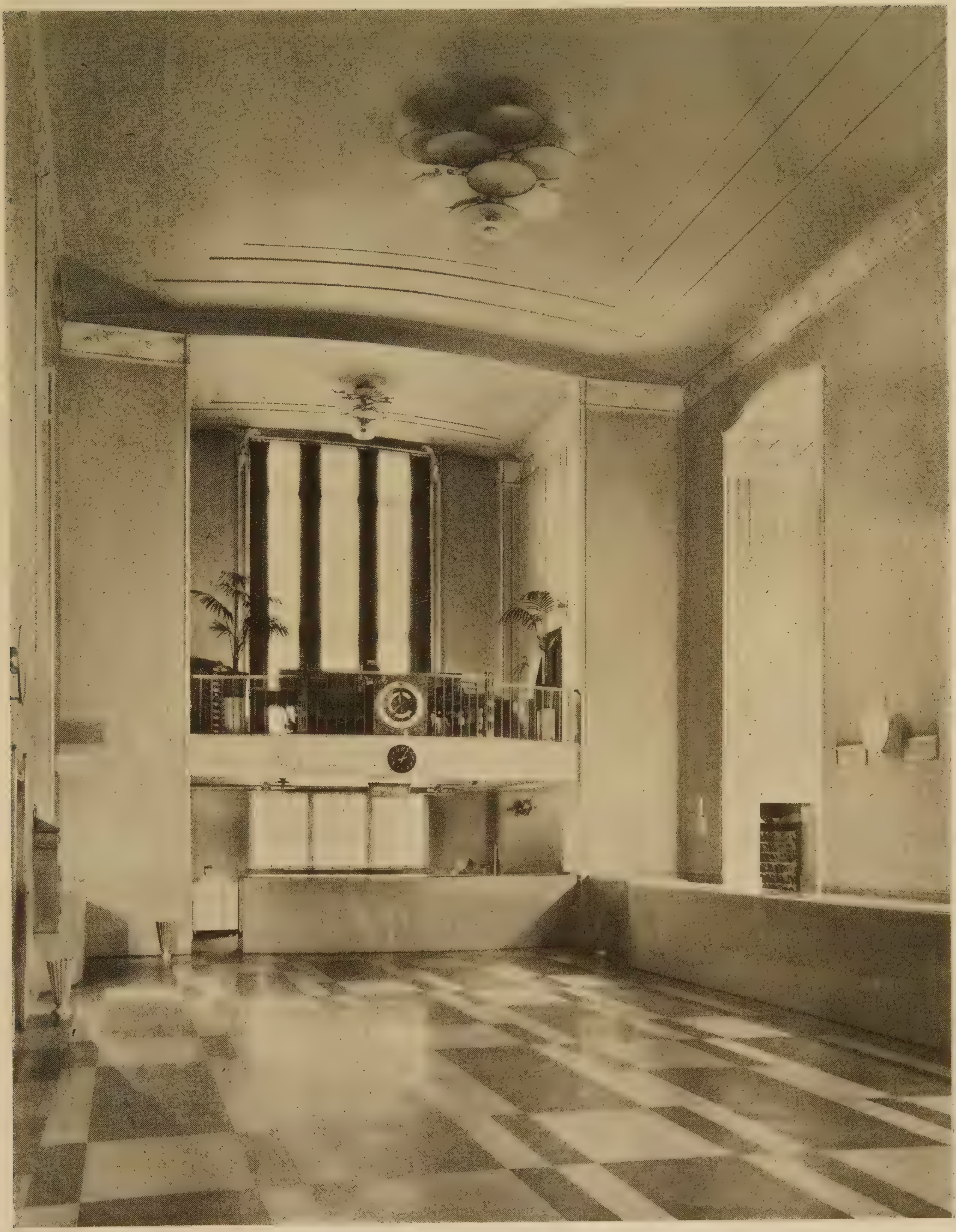


Chicago Motor Club. Holabird & Root, Architects

Photographs by Sigurd Fischer

Main entrance detail of the Chicago Motor Club





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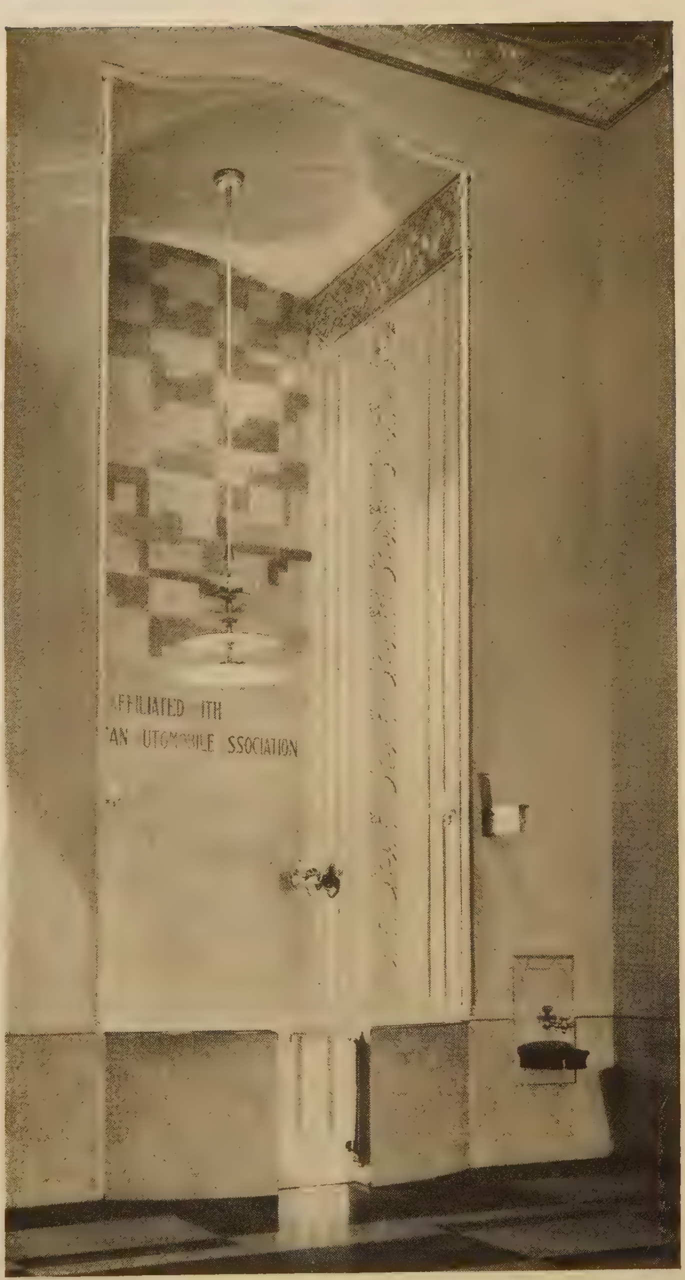
The lobby on ground floor, Chicago Motor Club.
Holabird & Root, Architects



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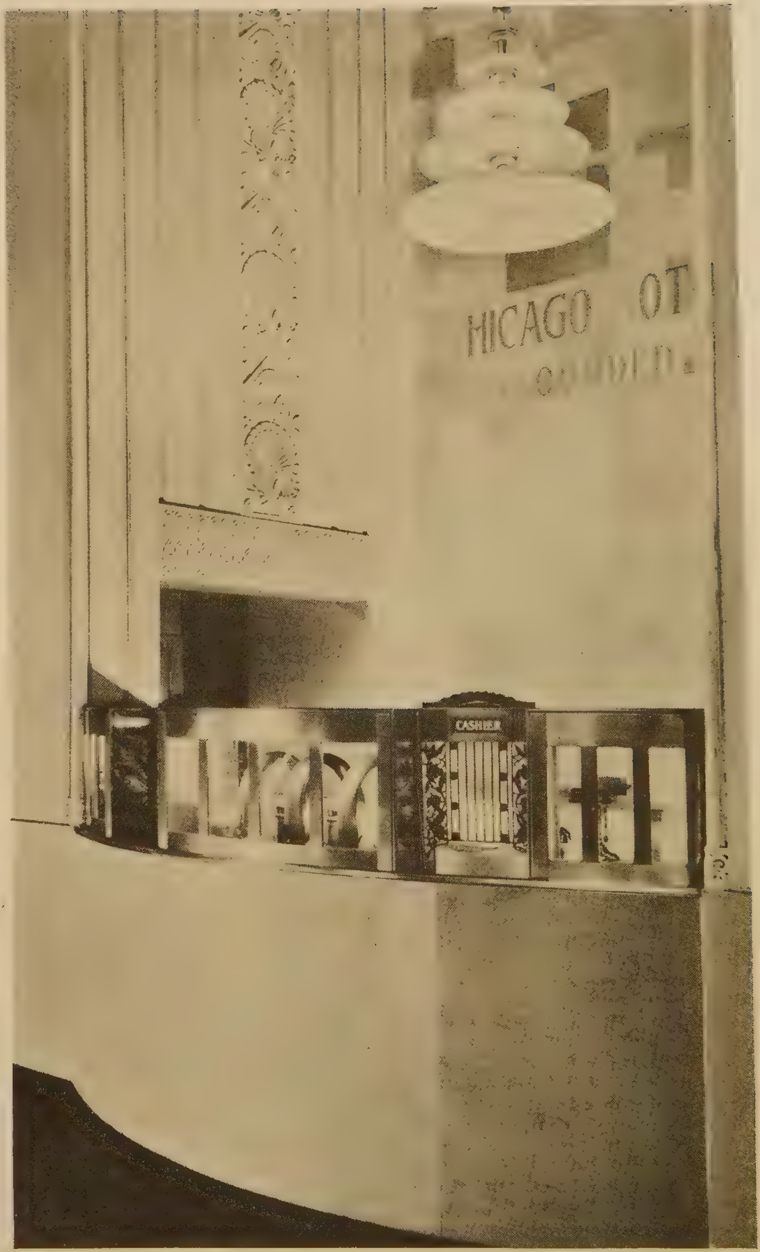
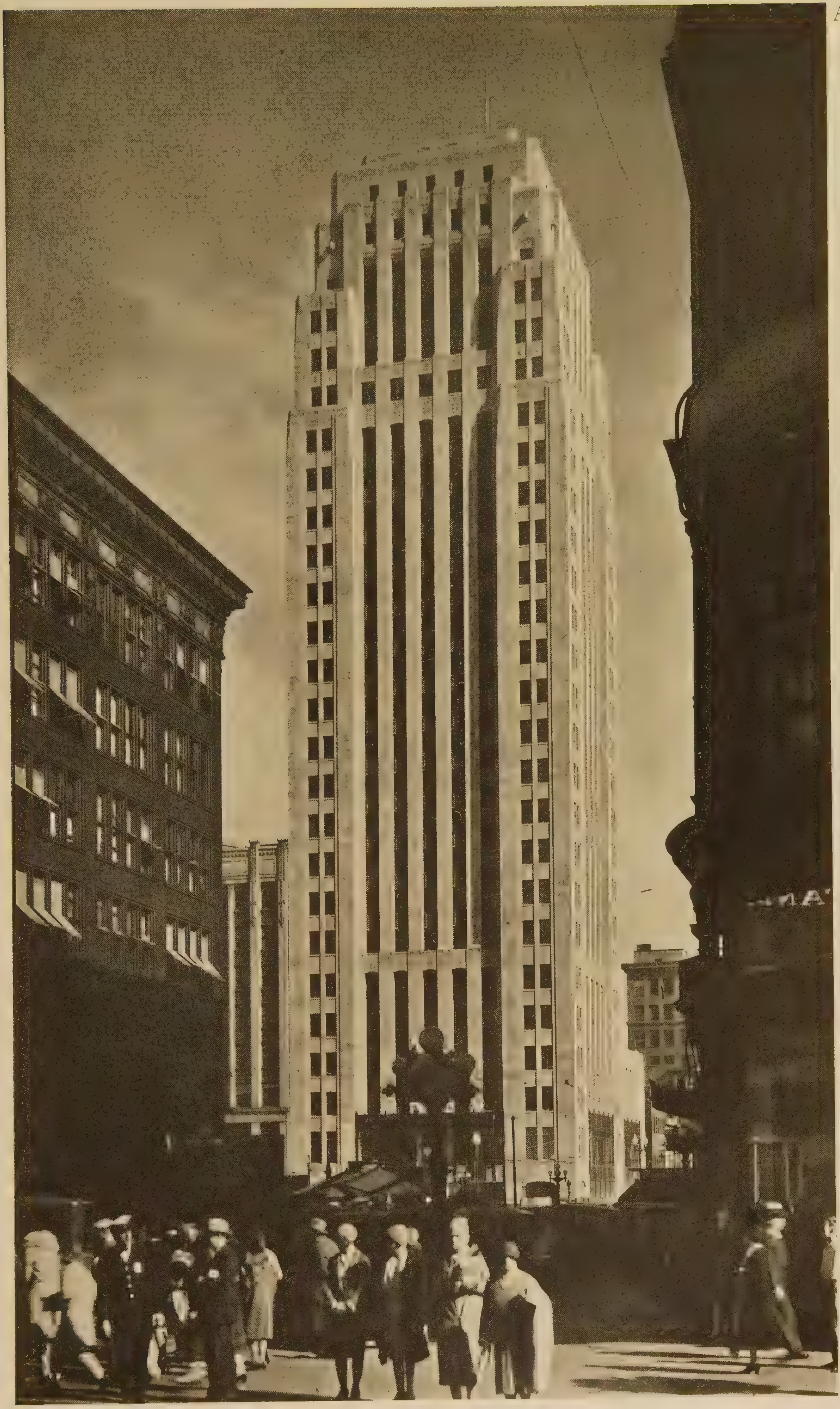
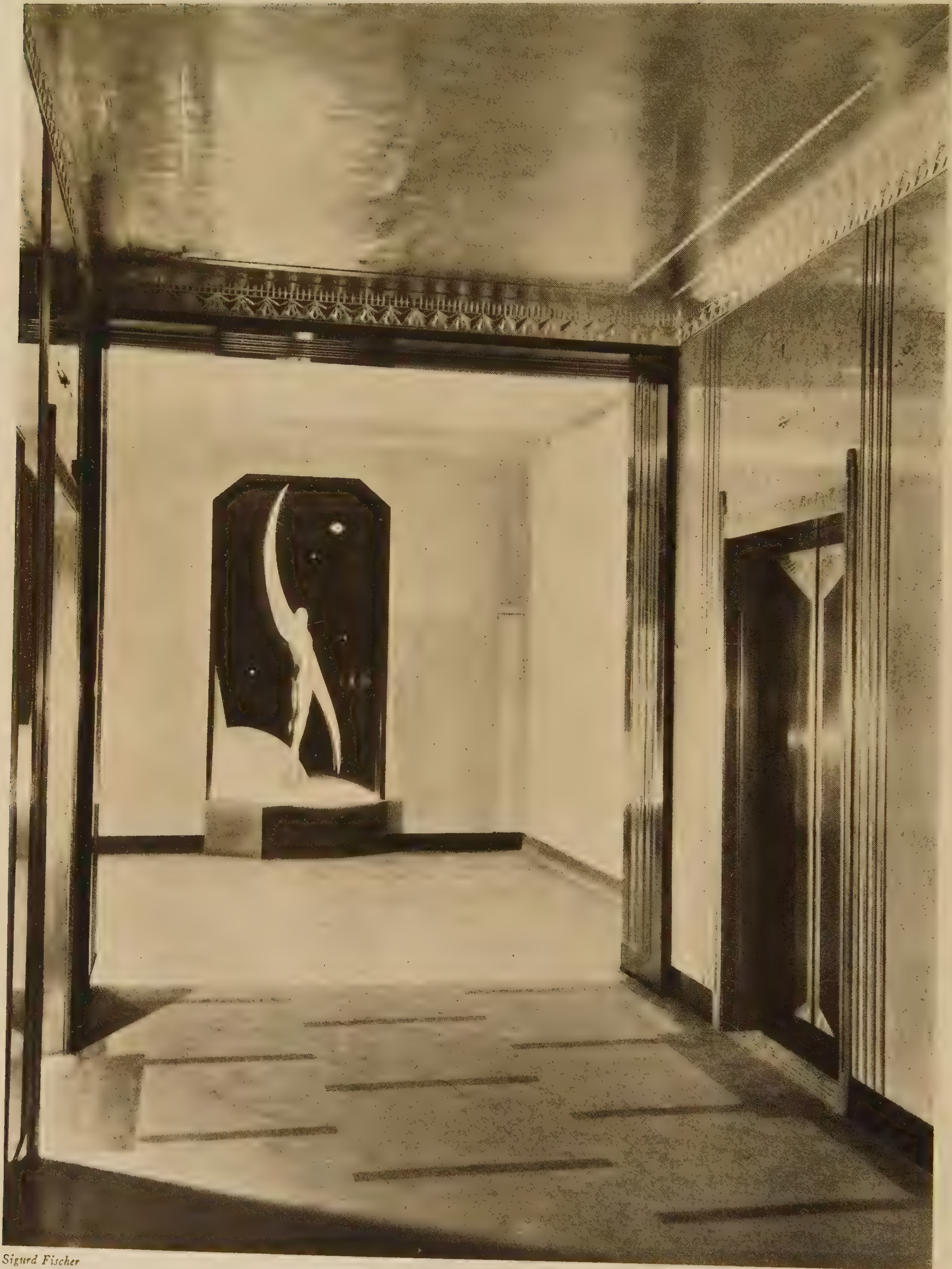


Two views of the main lobby on the ground floor of the Chicago Motor Club. Holabird & Root, Architects



The Rand Tower, Minneapolis. Holabird & Root, Architects



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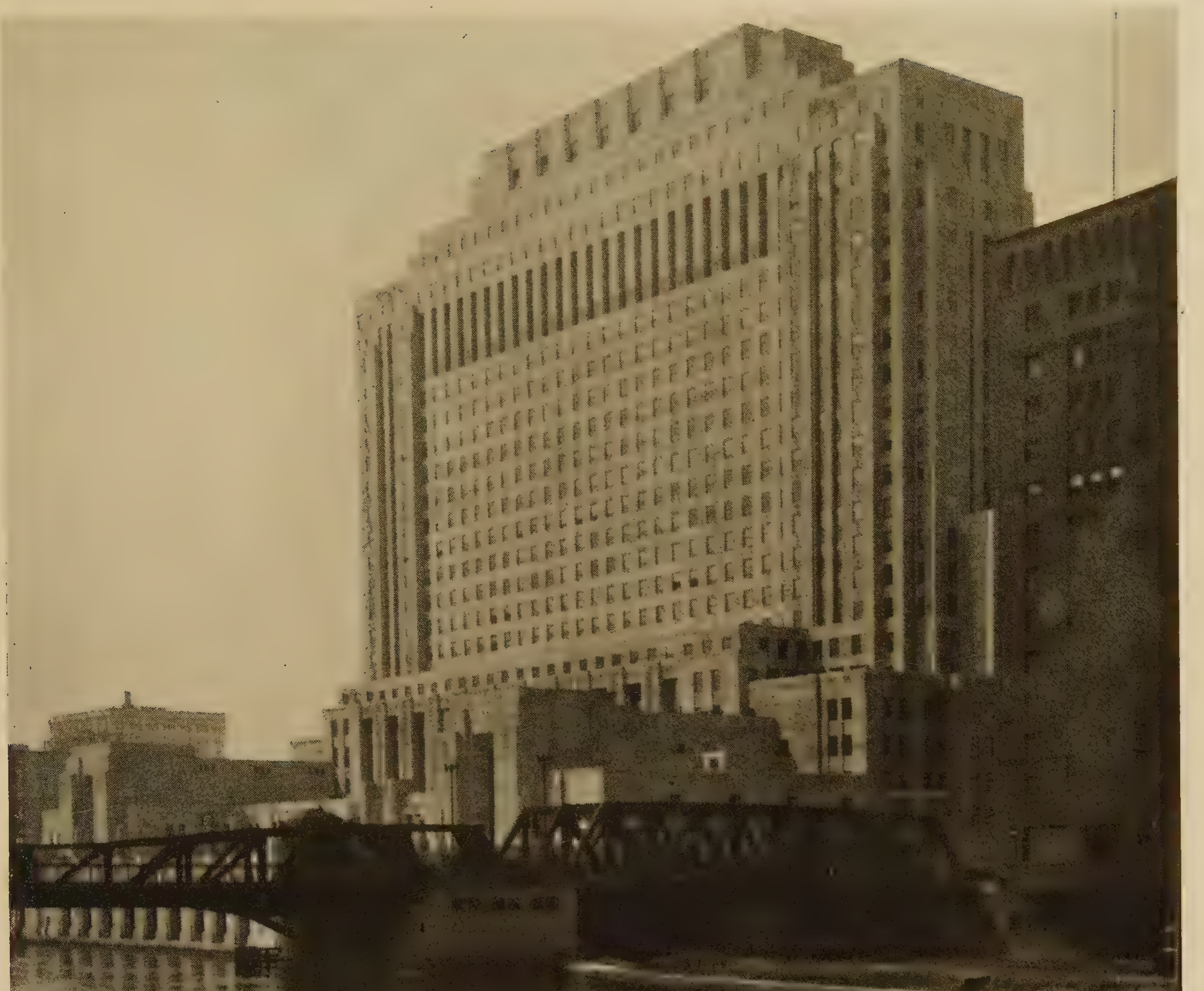
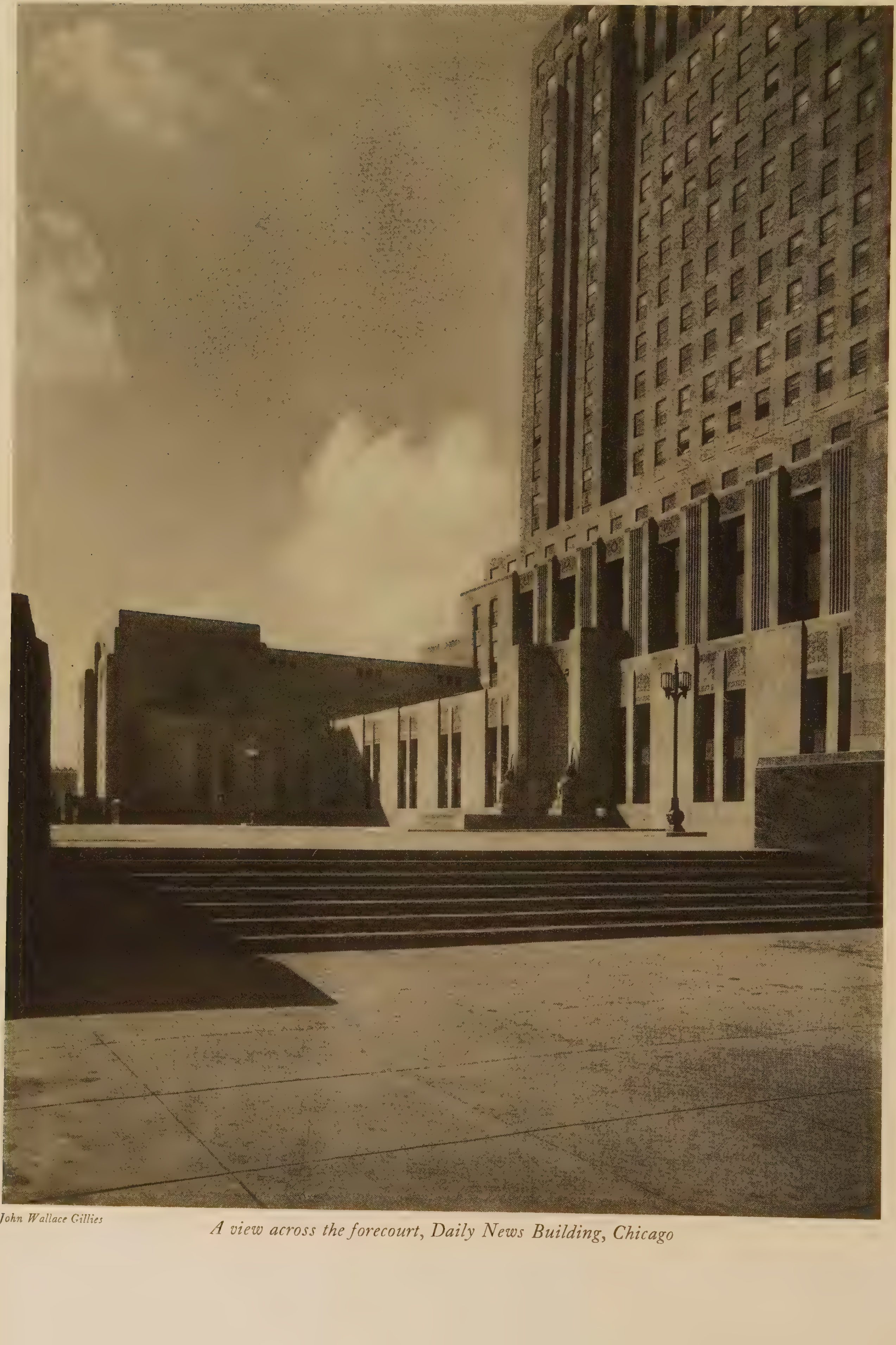
Entrance lobby and elevators, Rand Tower, Minneapolis. Holabird & Root, Architects



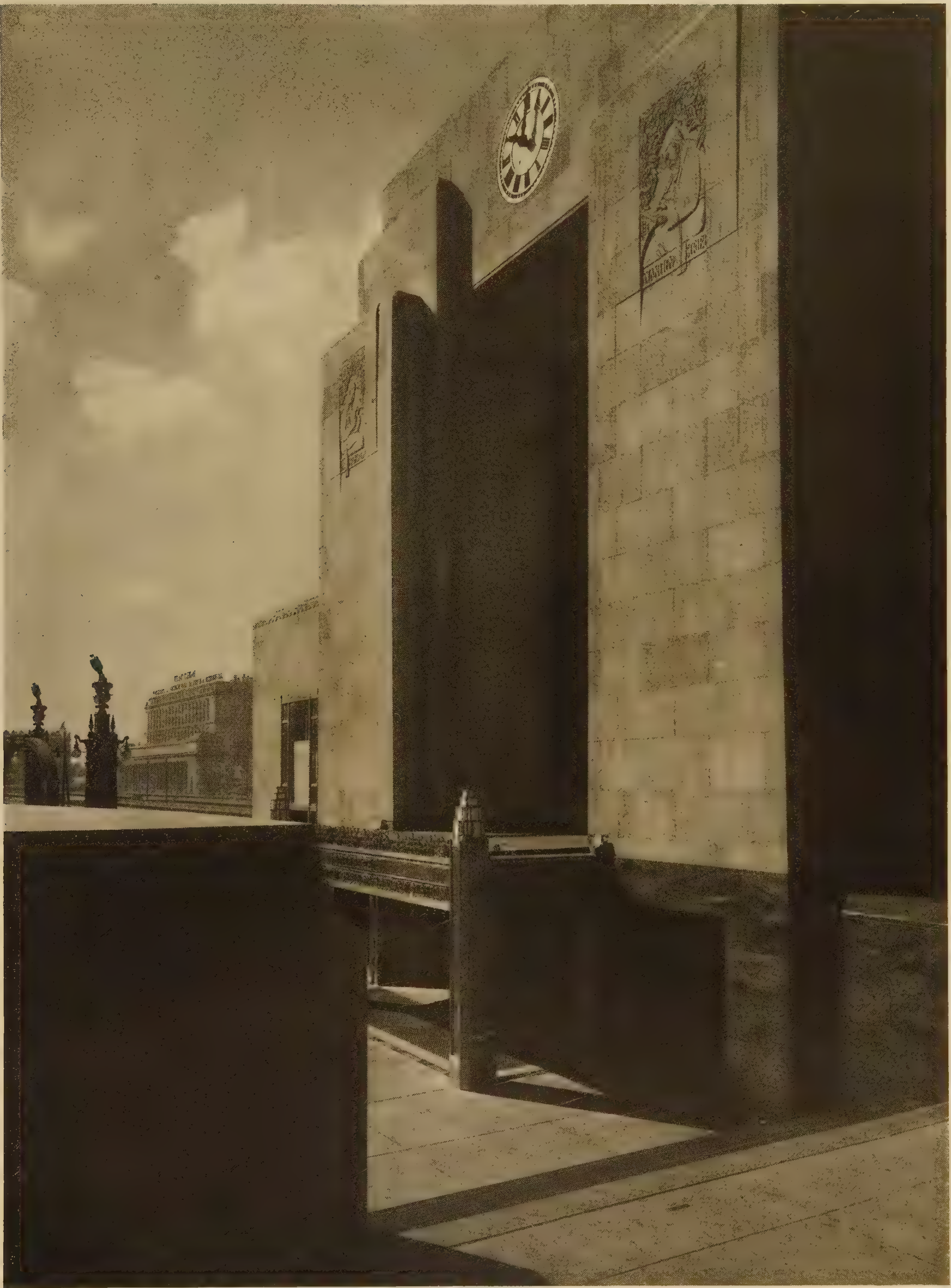
H. H. S.

Daily News Building from the River side. Holabird & Root, Architects



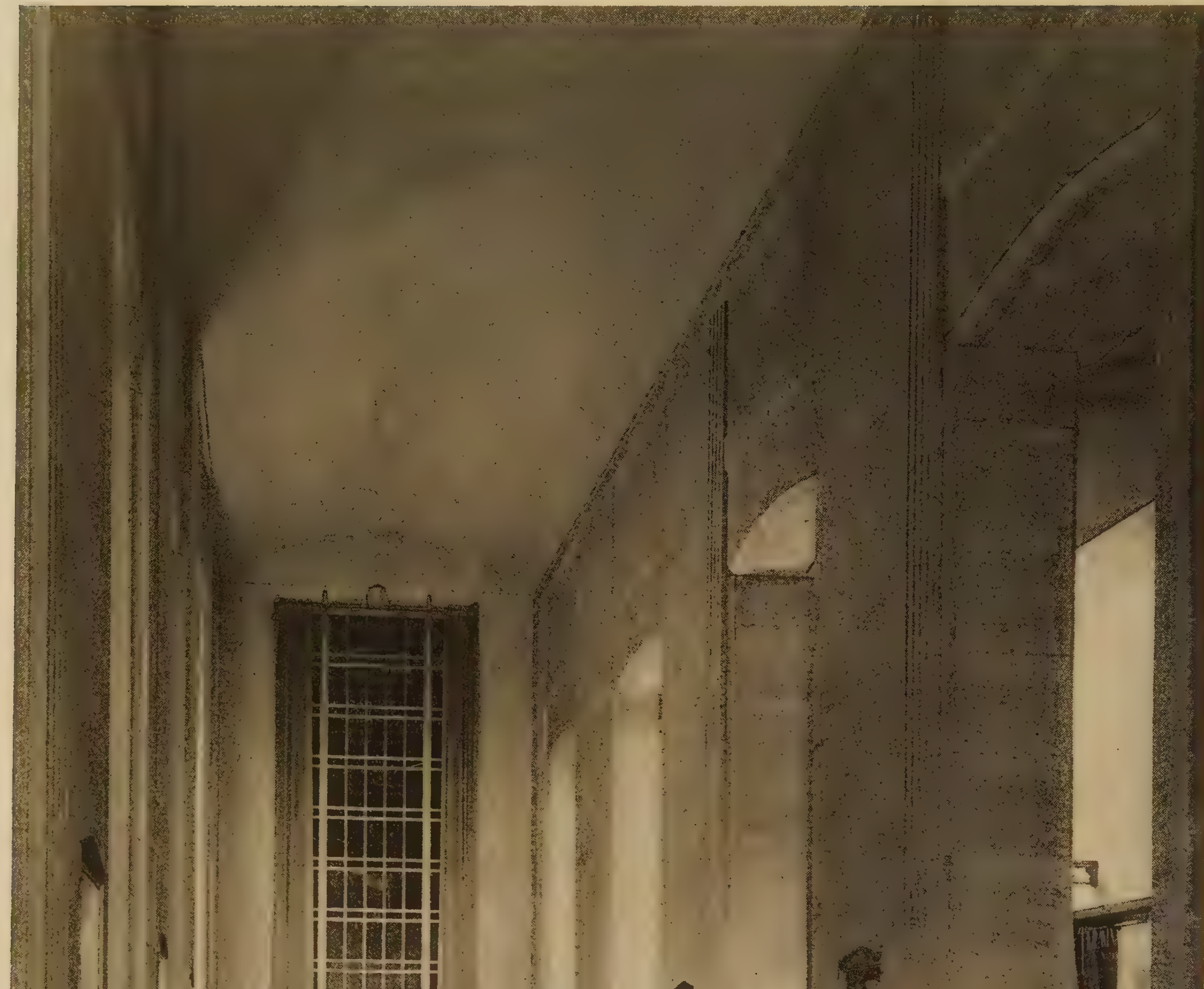
John Wallace Gillies

A view across the forecourt, Daily News Building, Chicago



John Wallace Gillies

Detail of entrance to concourse, Daily News Building, Chicago



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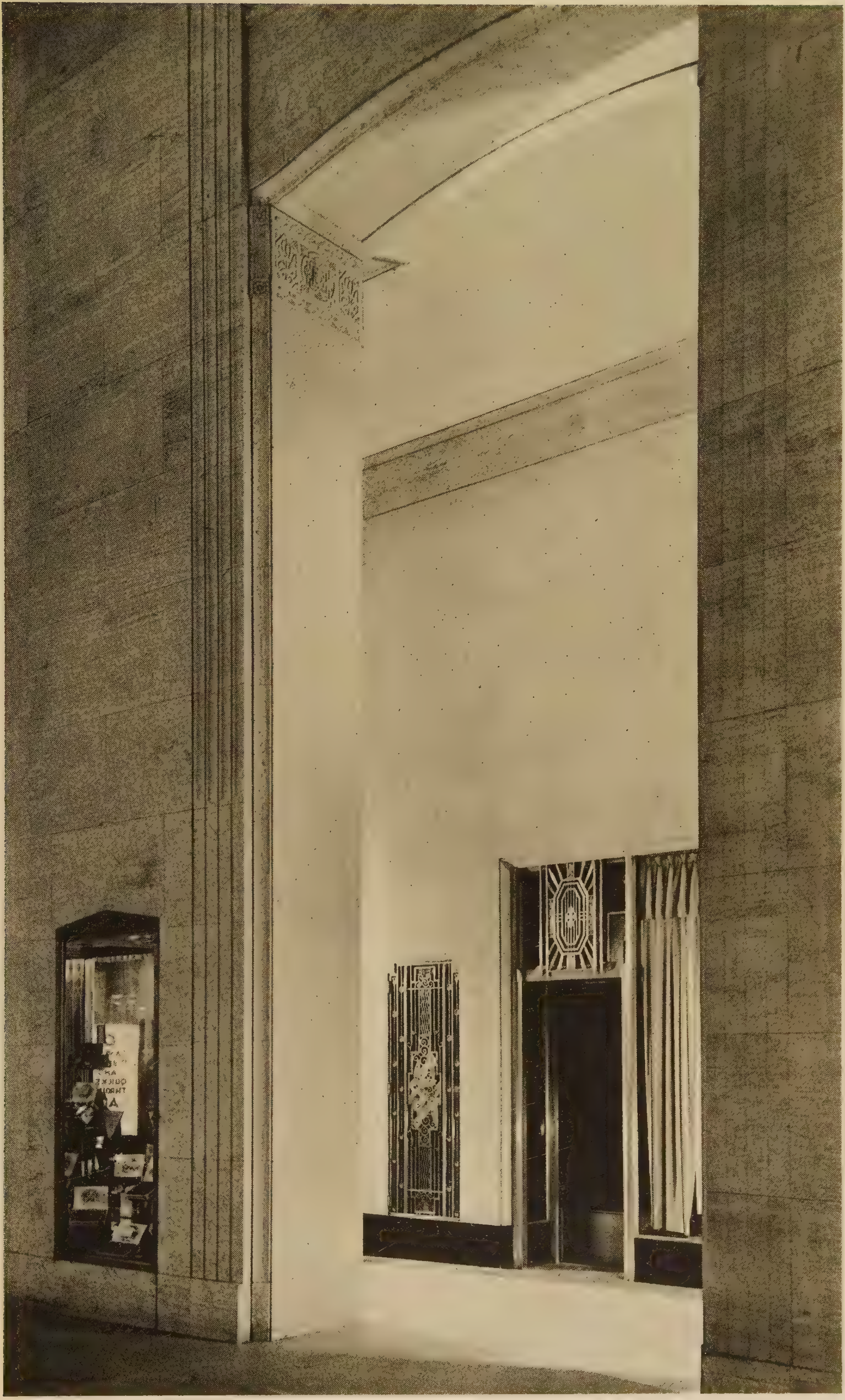
Concourse extending through the Daily News Building, Chicago, looking toward the river end. See page 32 for ceiling decoration which has been done since this photograph was made



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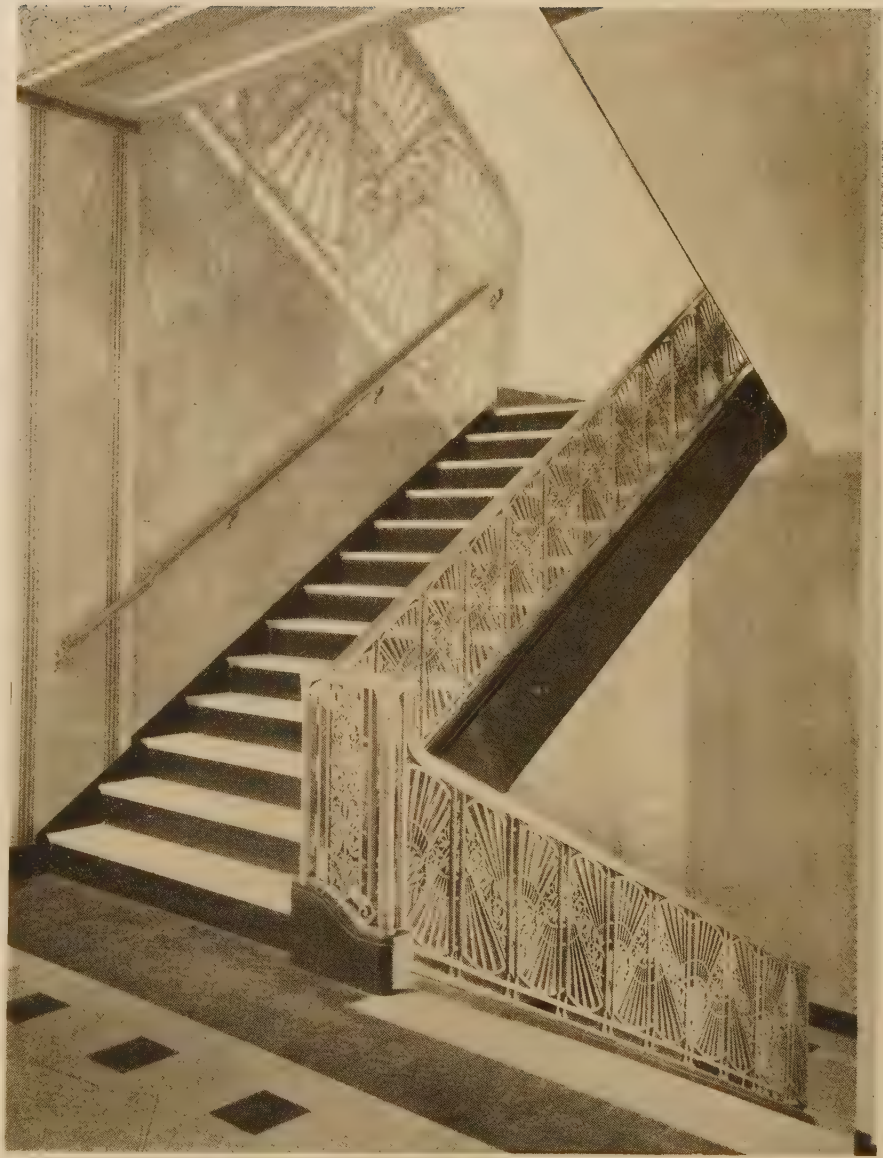
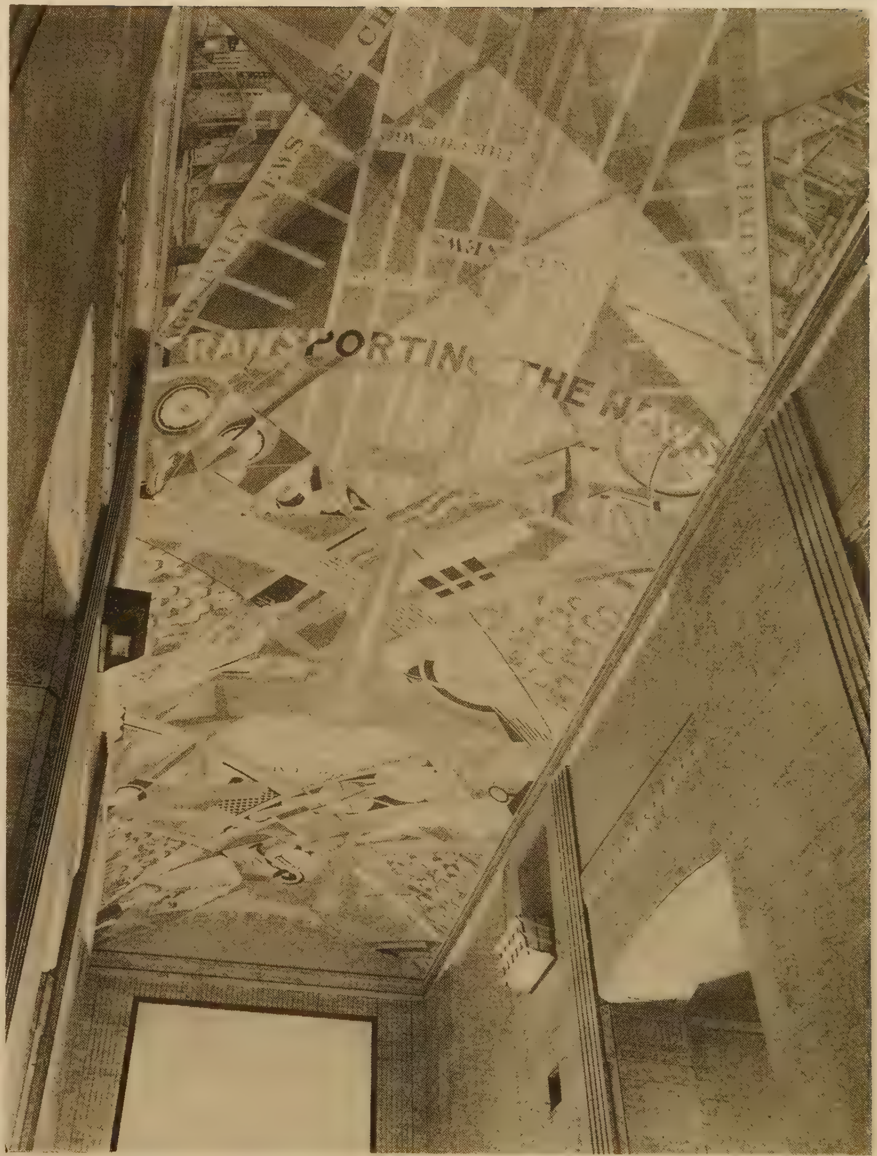
Detail of main concourse, Daily News Building, Chicago

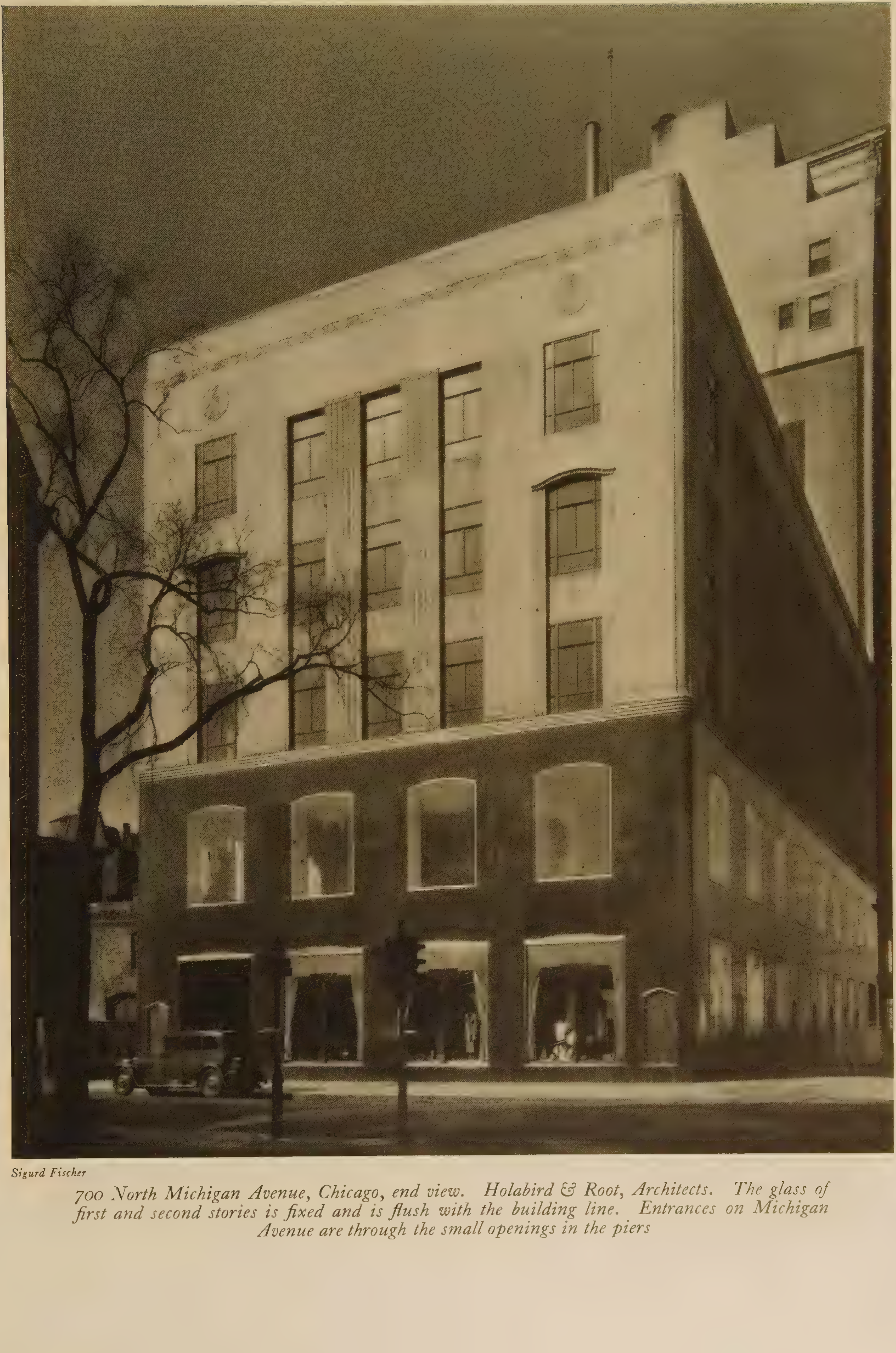


A stairway, Daily News Building, Chicago

Photographs by Sigurd Fischer



Ceiling of main concourse as decorated by John Norton



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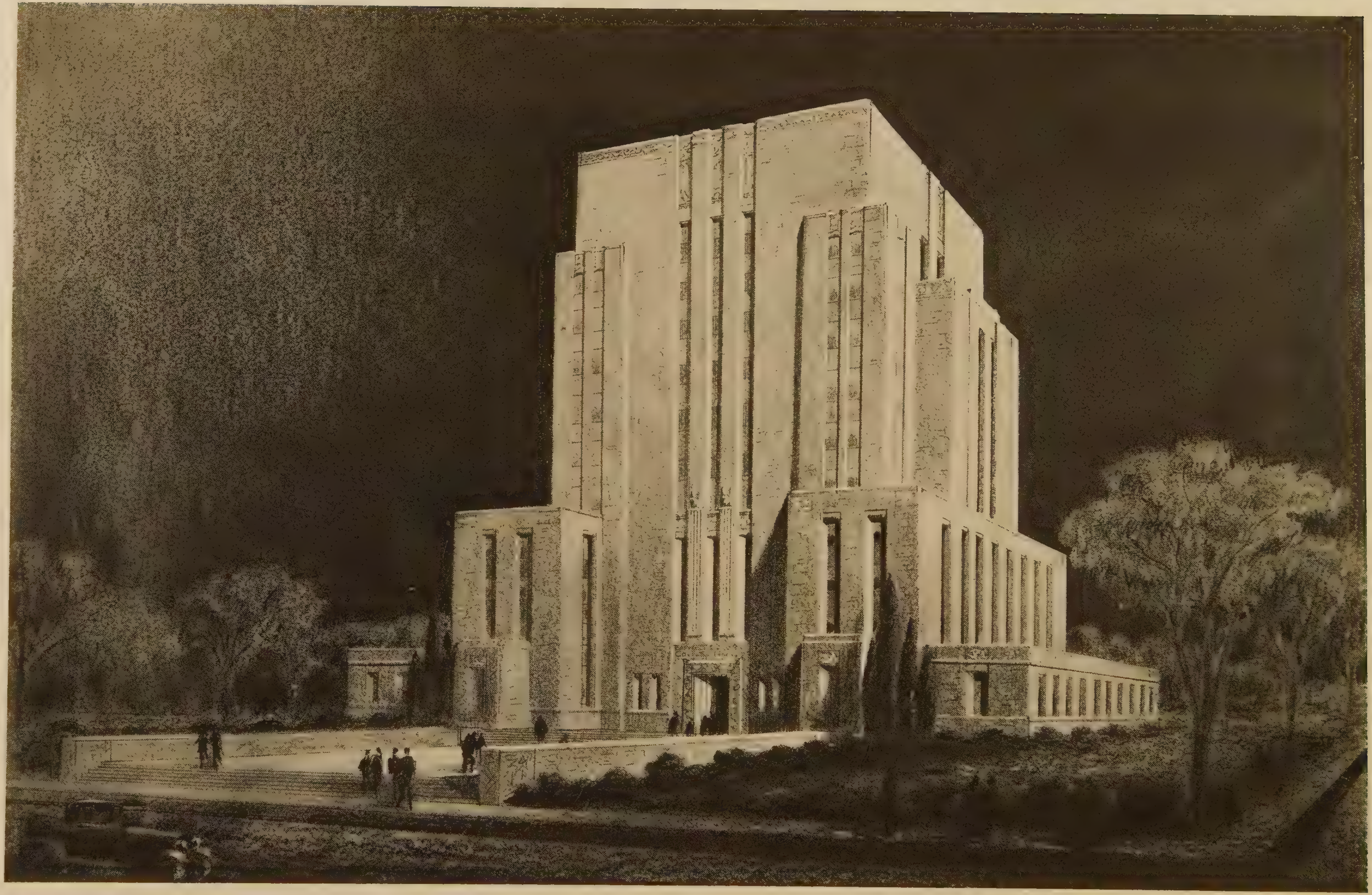
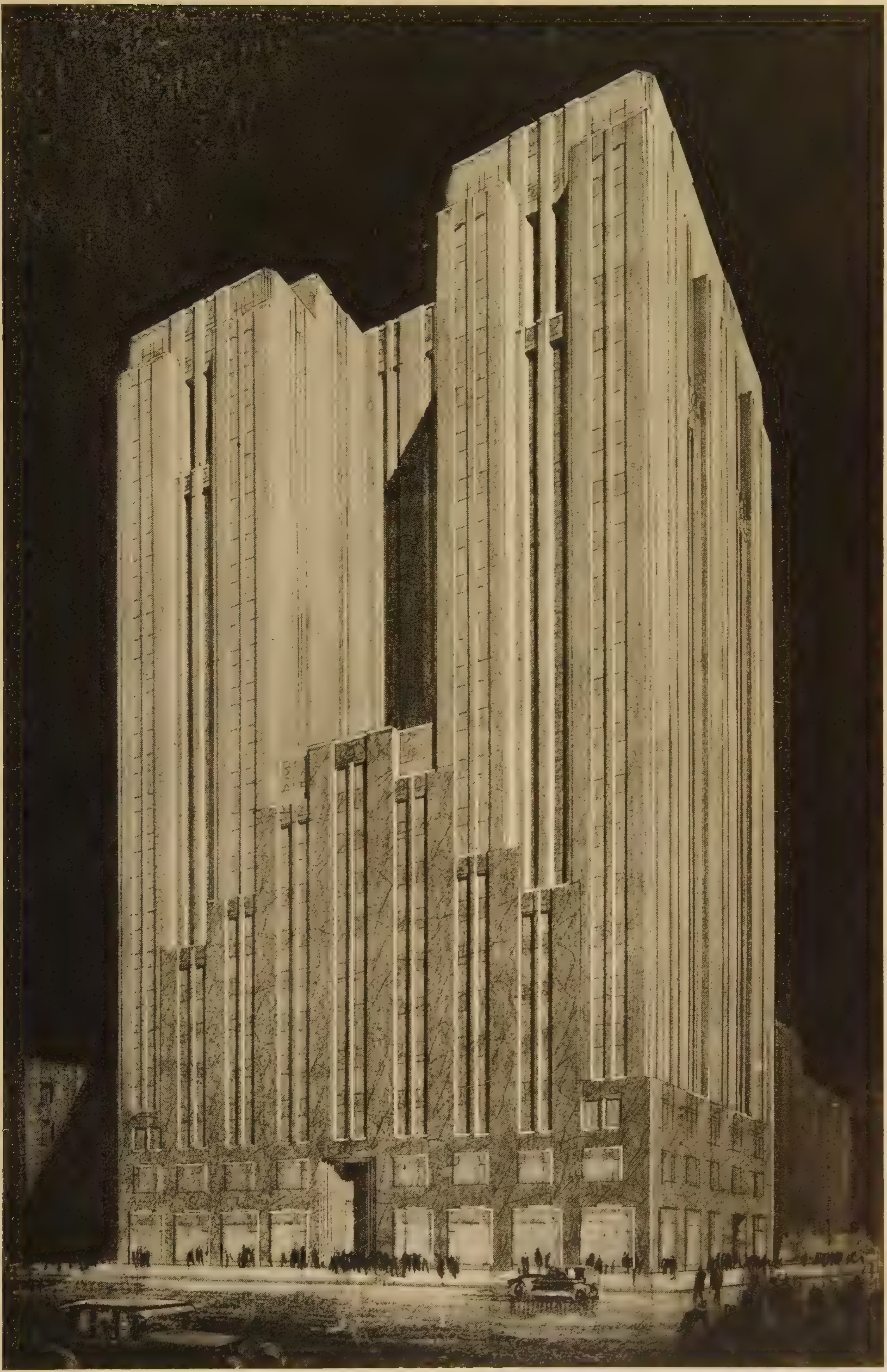
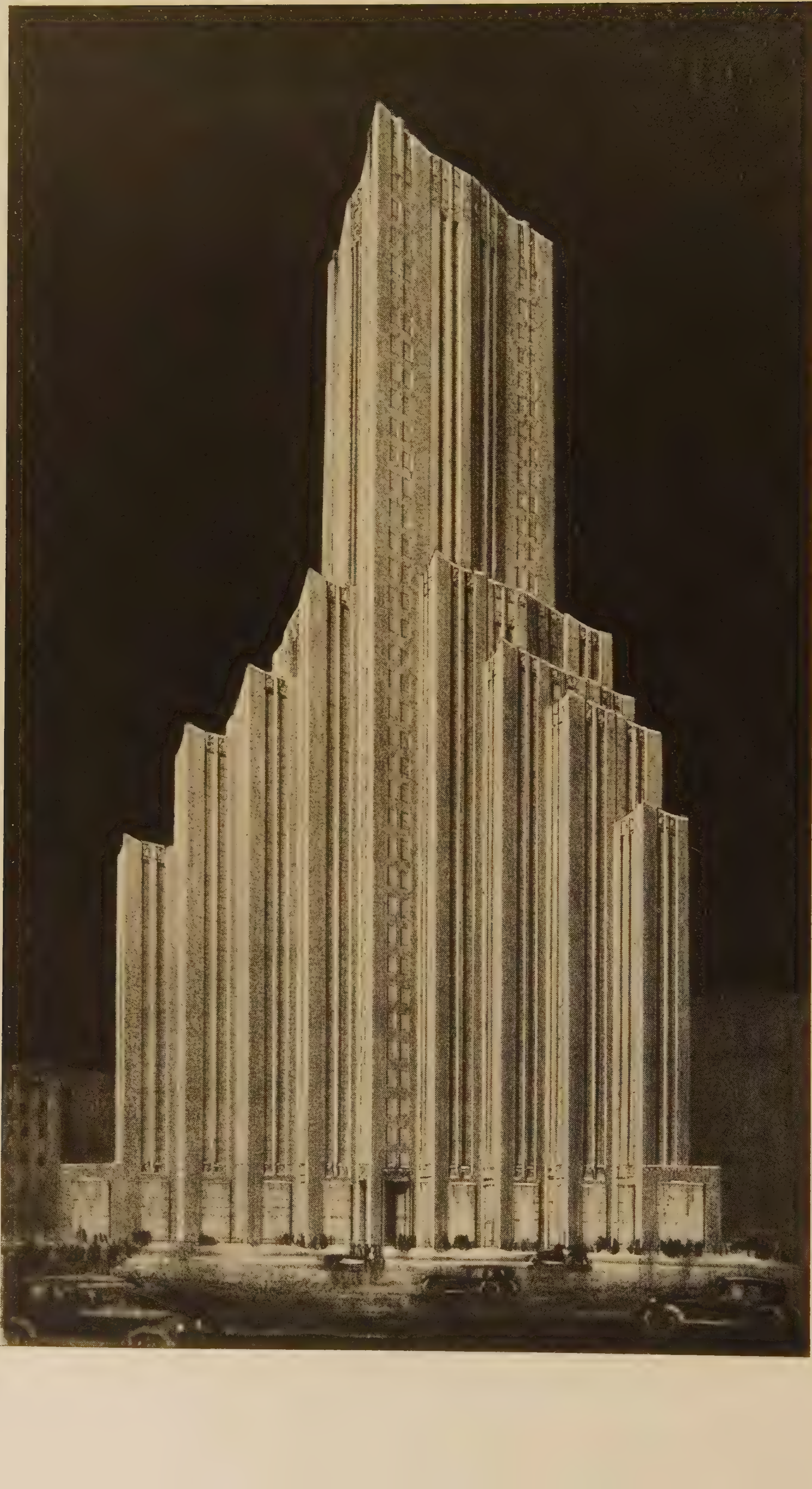
700 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, end view. Holabird & Root, Architects. The glass of first and second stories is fixed and is flush with the building line. Entrances on Michigan Avenue are through the small openings in the piers



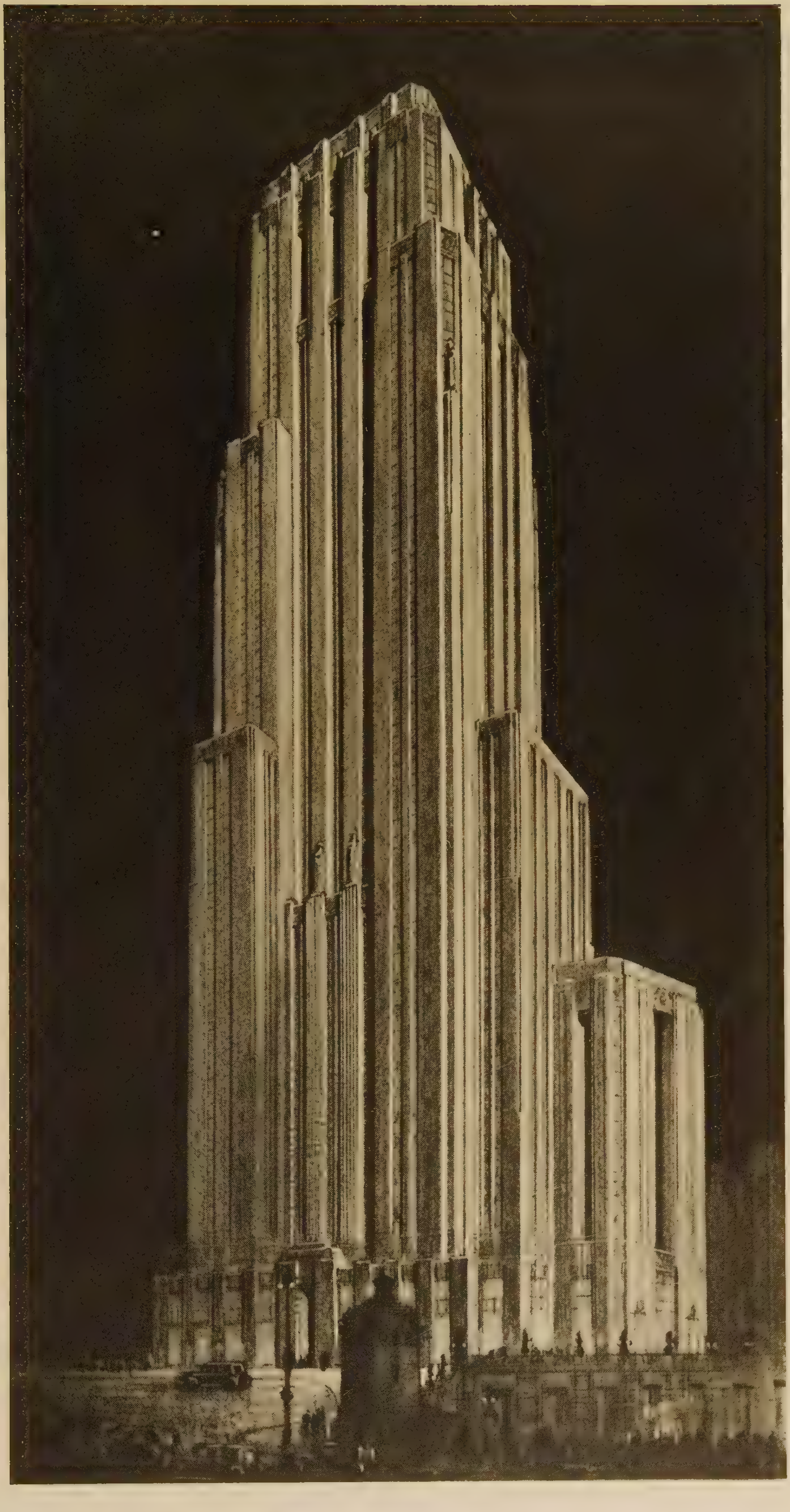
Preliminary perspective study for Racine County Court House, Racine, Wis. Holabird & Root, Architects. Drawing by Gilbert Hall



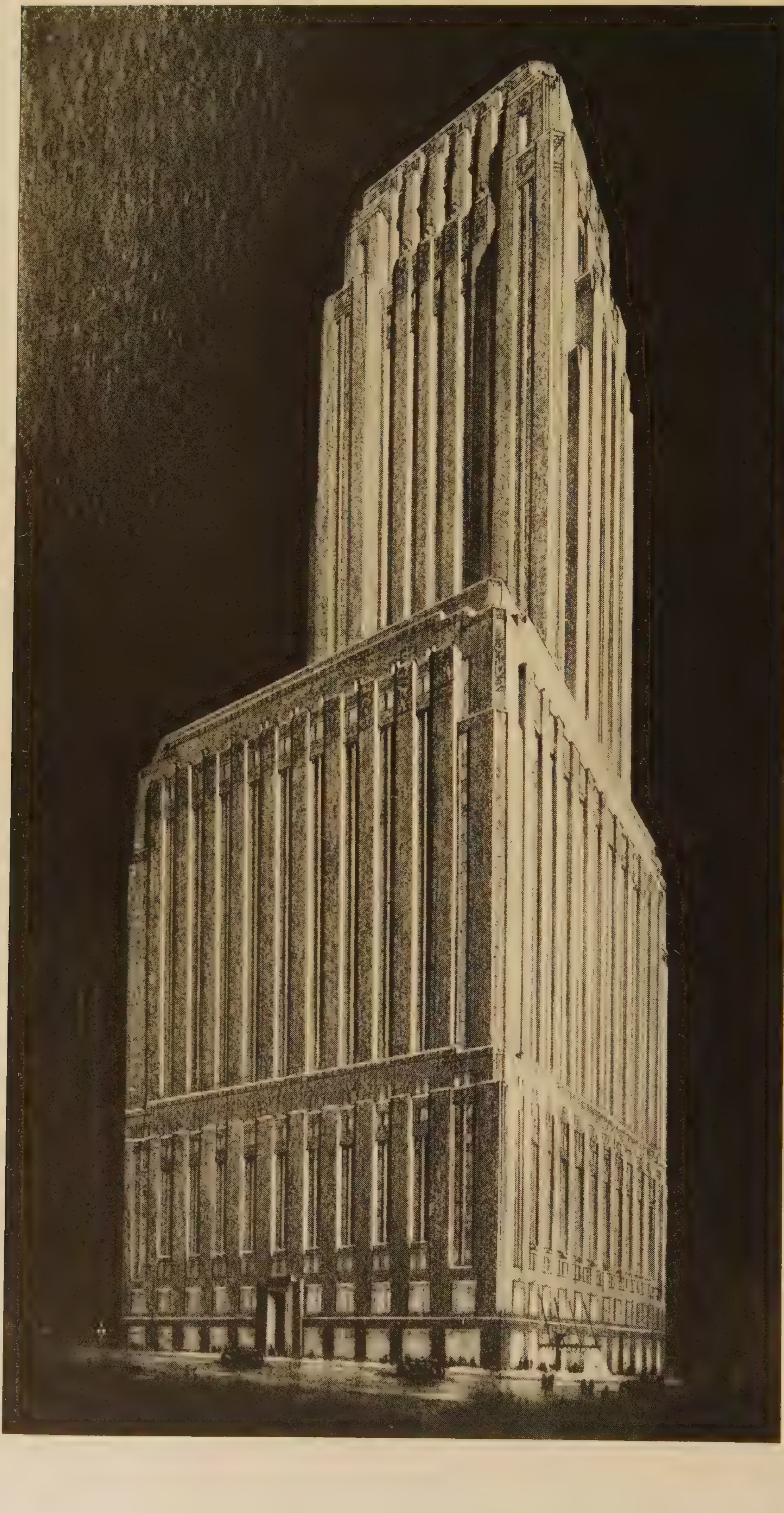
Study for an office building. Holabird & Root, Architects. Drawing by Gilbert Hall



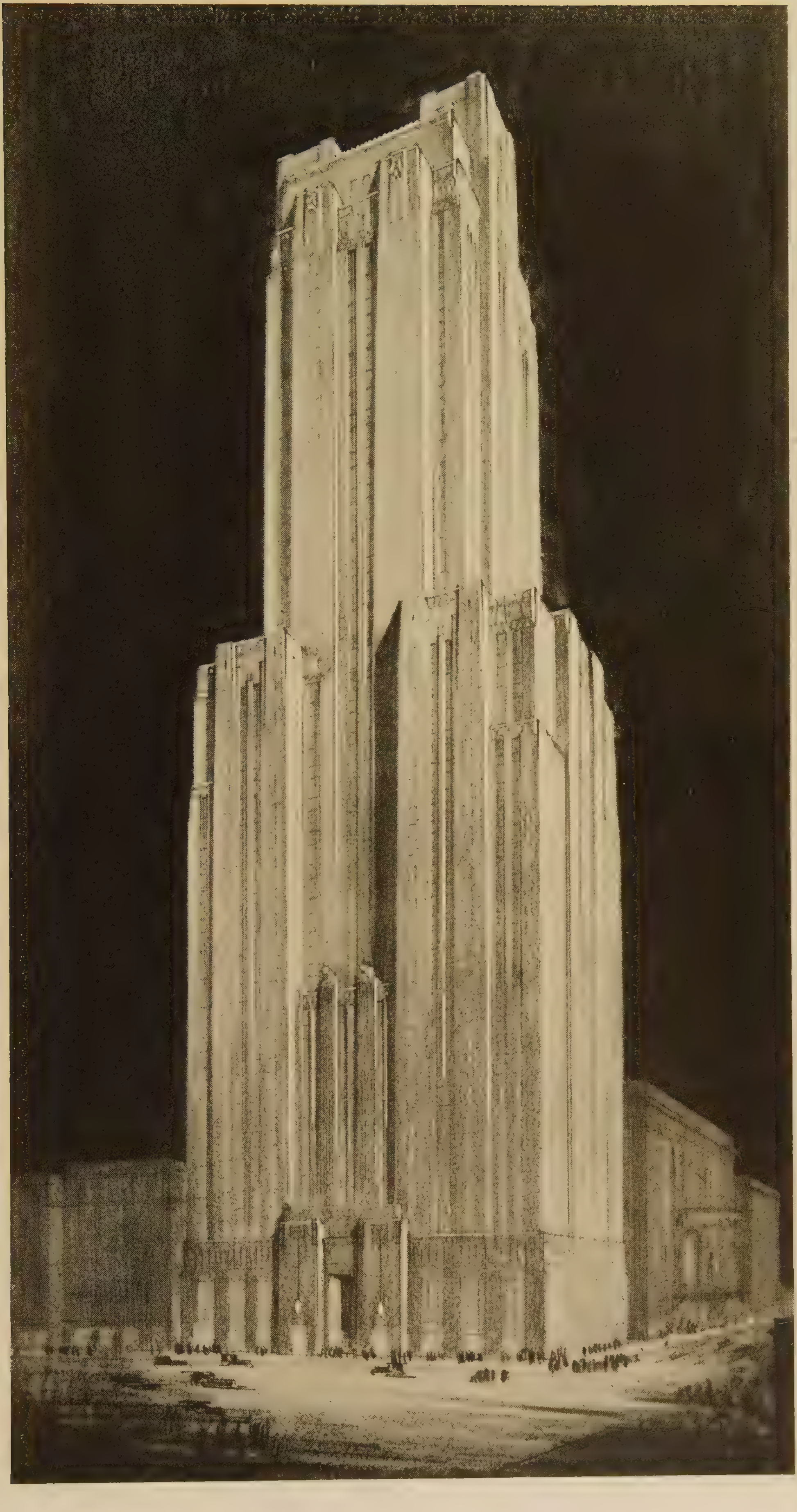
Perspective study of an office building on a plot of irregular shape. Holabird & Root, Architects. Drawing by Gilbert Hall



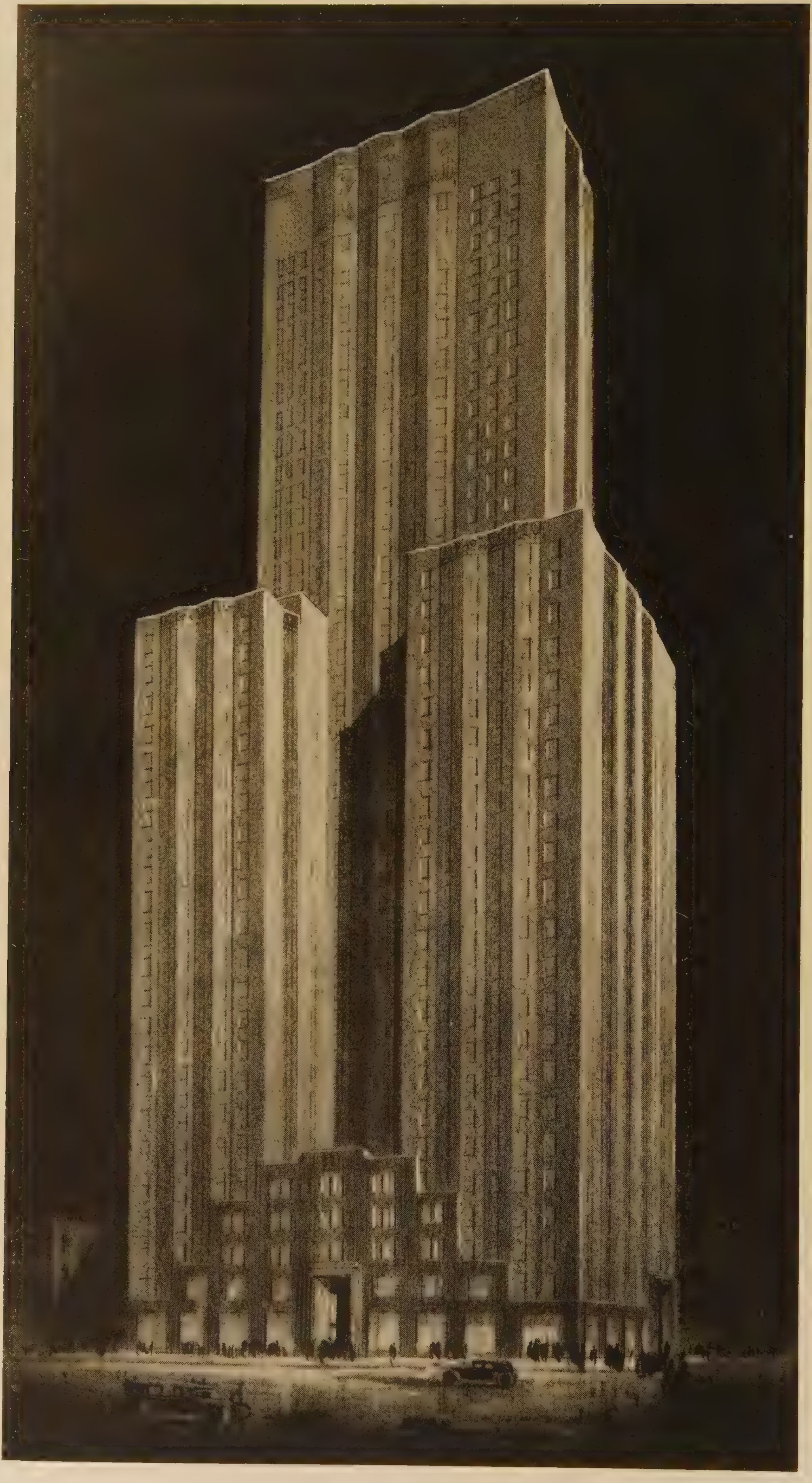
Perspective study for an office building. Holabird & Root, Architects. Drawing by Gilbert Hall



Perspective study for Michigan Square Building, Chicago. Holabird & Root, Architects. Drawing by Gilbert Hall



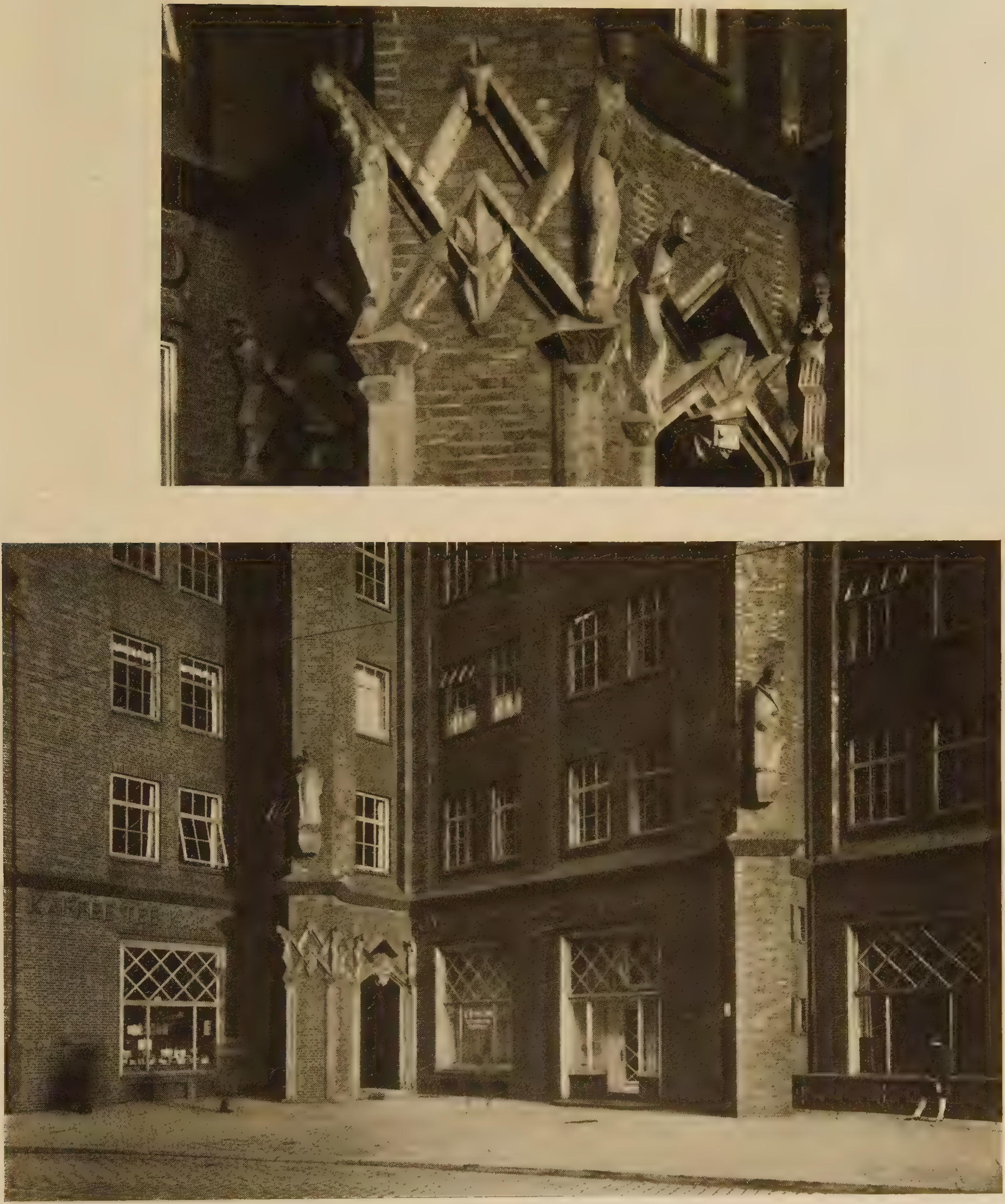
Perspective study for an office building. Holabird & Root, Architects. Drawing by Gilbert Hall



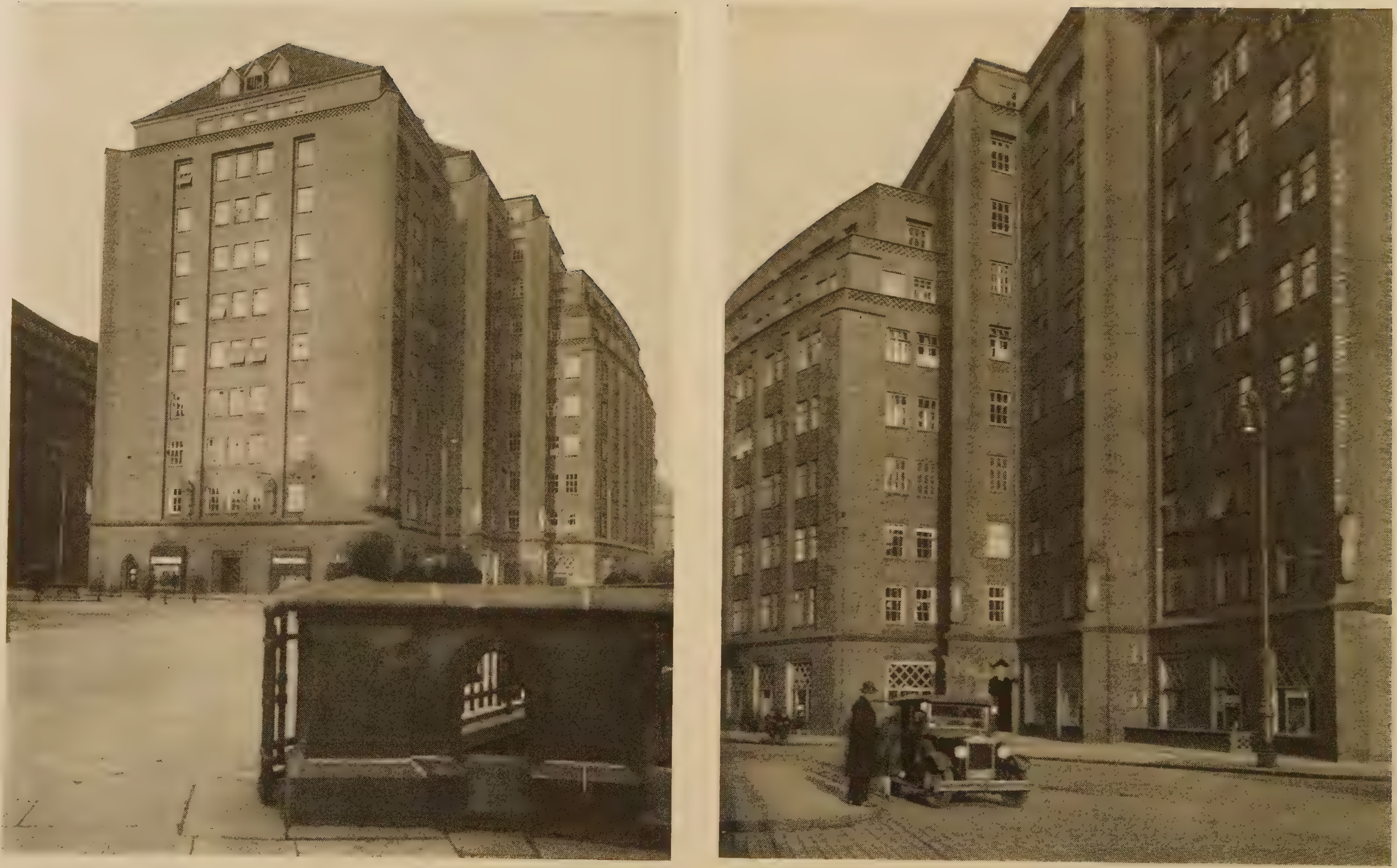
Perspective study for an office building. Holabird & Root, Architects. Drawing by Gilbert Hall

A Pictorial Review of Modern Architecture in Europe

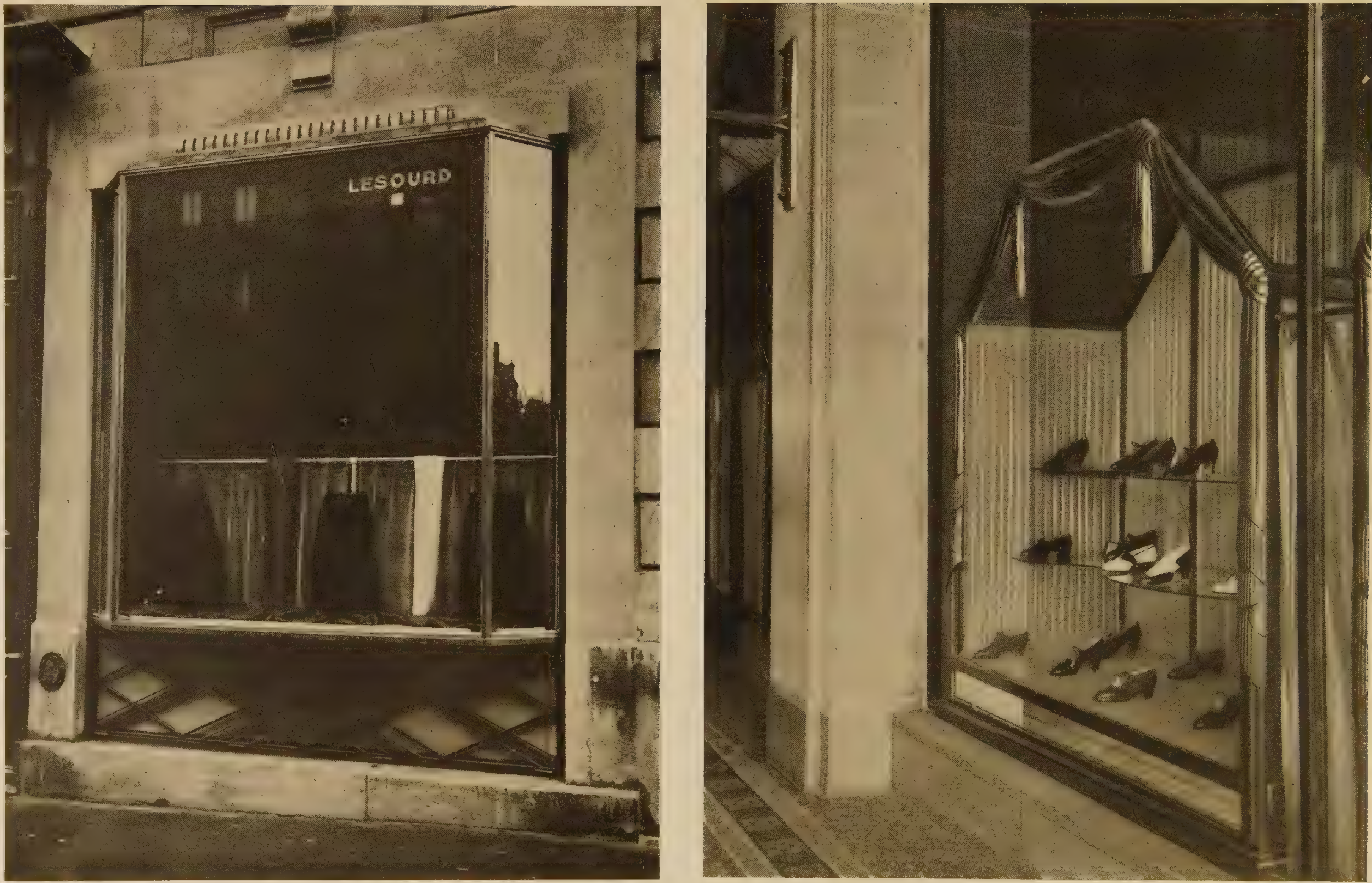
By F. R. YERBURY, Hon. A. R. I. B. A.



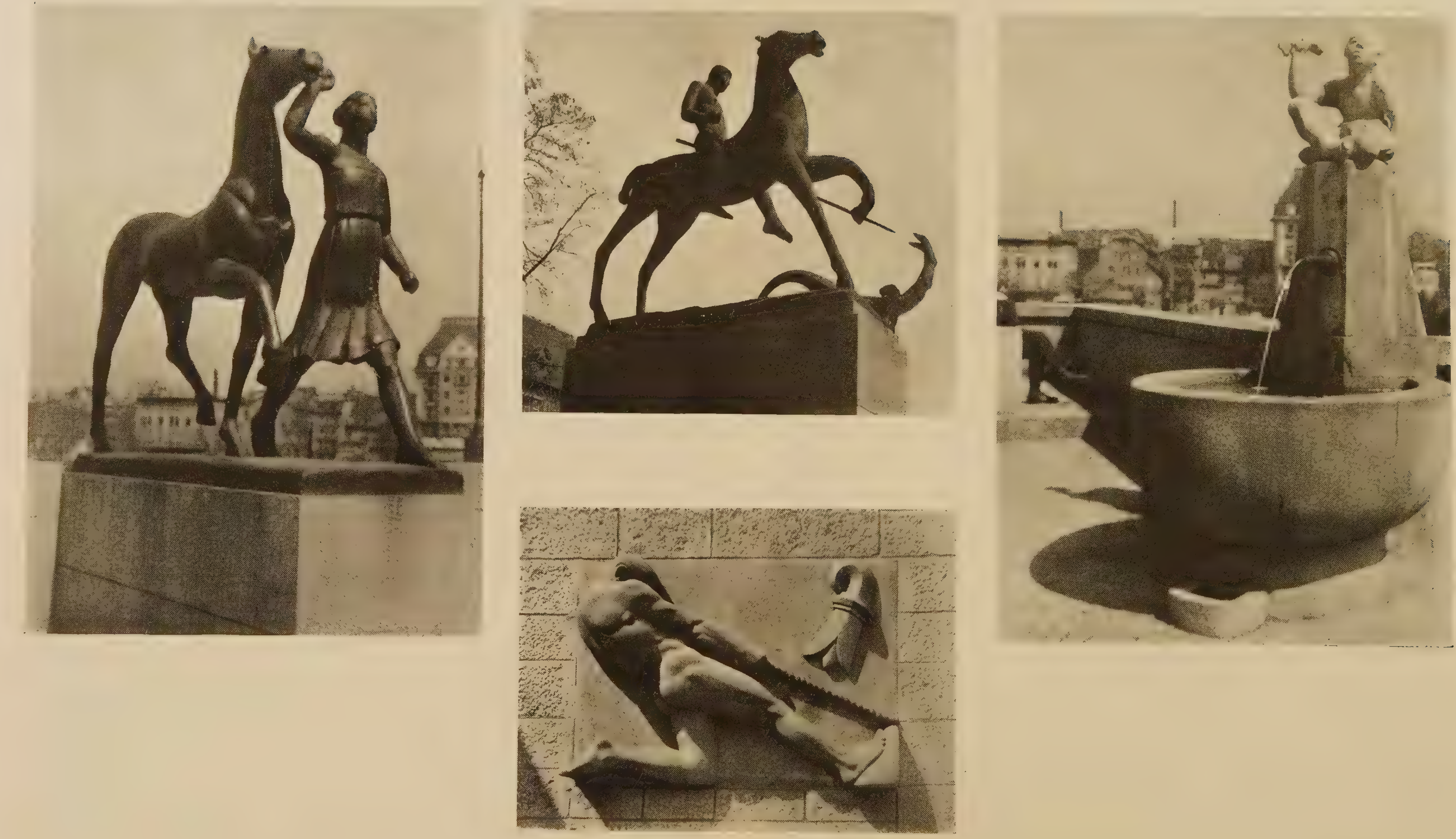
Ballin Haus, Hamburg, Germany *O. Gerson, Architect*



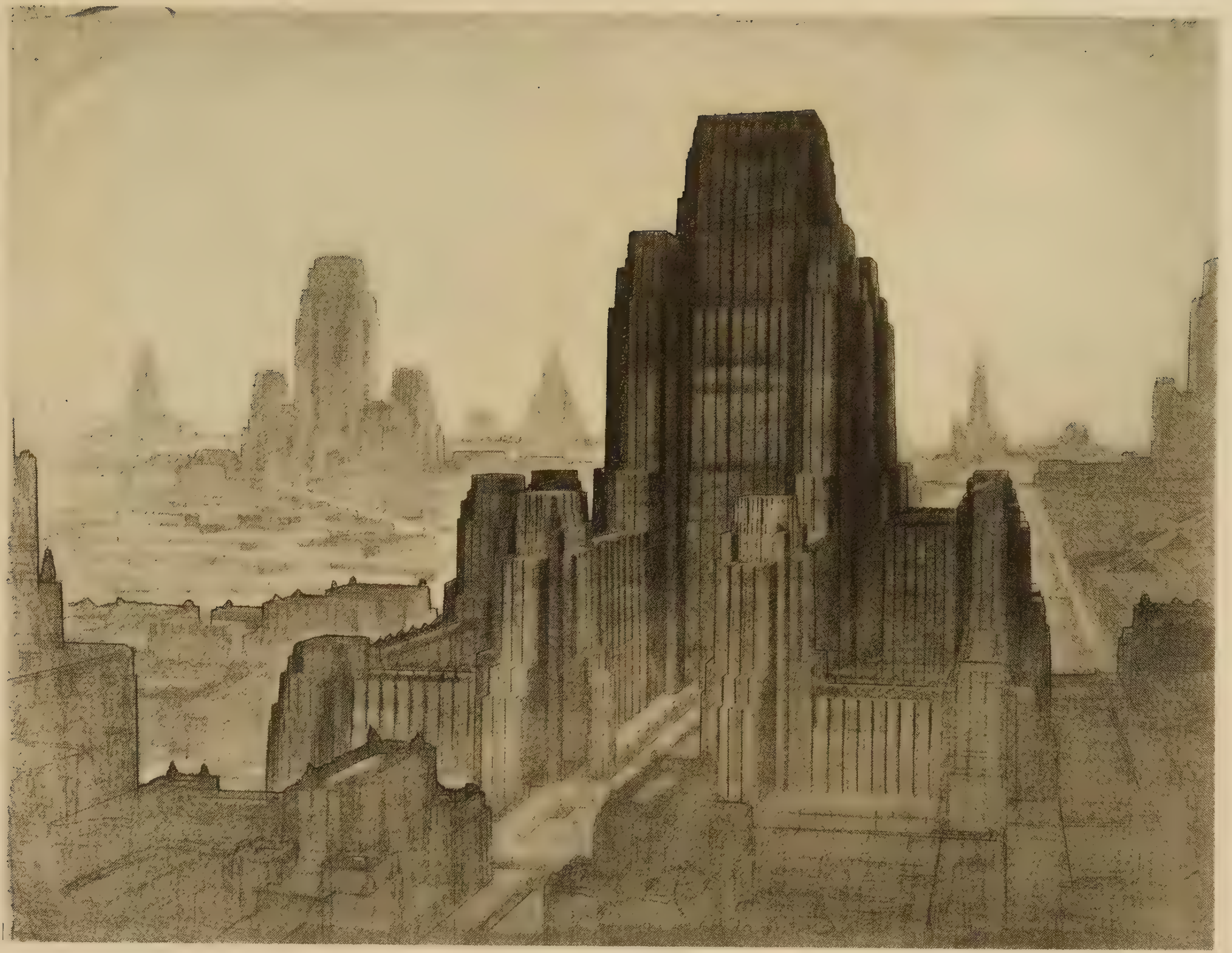
Ballin Haus, Hamburg, Germany. O. Gerson, Architect



Paris Shop Fronts



Street Sculpture in Basel, Switzerland

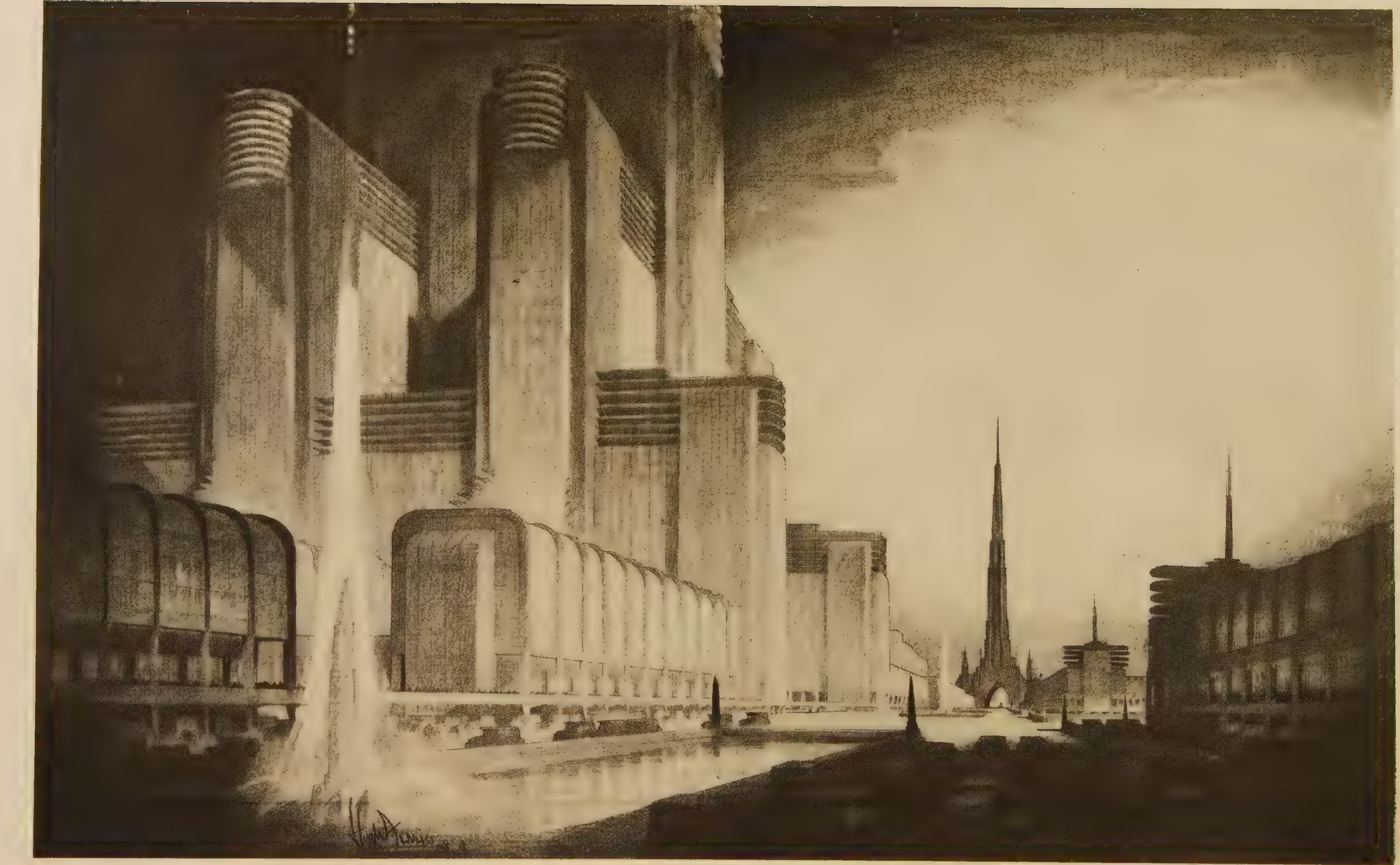


An Imaginary Structure

Two Drawings by

HUGH FERRISS

From "The Metropolis of Tomorrow," a recently published book of Mr. Ferriss's designs and renderings



An Imaginary Structure
HUGH FERRISS

EDITORIAL COMMENT

✤ Vol. LXI, No. 1 ARCHITECTURE January, 1930 ✤

THE PRESIDENT AND AMERICAN BUSINESS

PRESIDENT HOOVER'S timely efforts to maintain American business and our national prosperity upon an even keel reflect a new attitude towards the social and economic structure. Heretofore in times of business or financial stress the cry has immediately risen, "There ought to be a law . . ." This time, in place of an attempt to compel good times by legislation, there is envisioned a mobilization of business itself, guided by leaders who have achieved their leadership through natural selection in the business world. As Mr. Julius H. Barnes, chairman of the board of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, said in a recent address: "It would be an inspiration to all who believe in self-government of the people if there could be constructed now such an example of teamplay as would show that voluntary service is superior to government compulsion."

Signs are already abundantly in evidence, showing that the great ship of American business, having stuck her nose into an unexpectedly heavy wave with a resulting shudder through the whole vessel, is plowing her way serenely on the course again, undeflected, undaunted, and with very little damage beyond the washing overboard of some things that had not, unfortunately, been made fast.

THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

THE student body of a medical school recently petitioned its faculty: "We respectfully urge that no more time be wasted in attempting to acquaint us with the history of medicine. It seems to us of no value to be taught how pitifully little was known of medicine a hundred years or more ago. Rather than learn how blindly and wrongfully the science was practised in the past, we would use the available time in working out a better procedure for to-day and to-morrow."

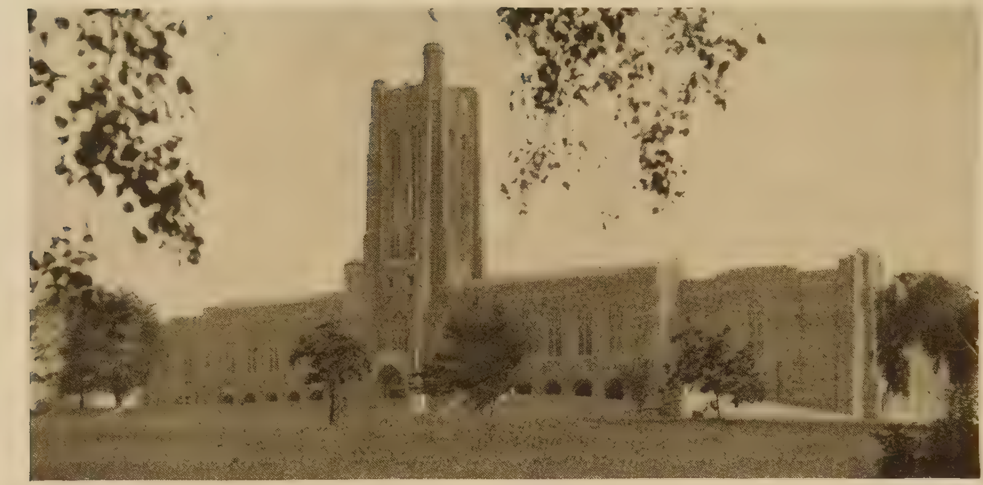
This attitude of mind parallels that which is met in the architectural schools as well. It becomes more and more difficult to interest the student in how architects of past eras added each his relatively small contribution to the art treasures of the world. To-day the student feels himself caught in the powerful current of modern progress. He would set his eyes and all his efforts on the problems of to-day and to-morrow without learning the somewhat tedious lessons of the past.

President Lowell of Harvard, in one of his books on government, questions the commonplace conception of the government as a "ship of state." He goes on to say, as paraphrased by Dean Edgell, "A government is not a ship nor in any way like a ship. The government might better be likened to a coach. The coach is drawn by powerful horses who are running away. On the box a strong man is attempting to guide the team, while several other strong men try to take the reins away from him. Within are a number of passengers who display not the slightest interest in the behavior or the progress of the coach, but in the rumble are several old gentlemen with spyglasses who, by an intent scrutiny of the road behind, are attempting to prophesy the character of the road ahead."

Nevertheless, to shift the metaphor, the surveyor who is plotting a new railroad across the continent will proceed from the known to the unknown: every sight ahead with his transit will be checked with a sight back along the way he has come. Everything that man knows is of the past. The present is a mere dividing line—the brink of the known, from which we peer into the unknown. Lewis Mumford put a lot of wisdom into a few words when he said: "If the past be looked upon as an ancestor, the present may be tempted to copy and imitate it: but once it is regarded as an embryo, we have an incentive to further growth and development, and will not be embarrassed if the adult form of our architecture be as different from that of the older period as a grown man is from the curious little animal with gills that he becomes at one period of his existence. . . . In short, the past is a point of departure." Not the present, it will be noted, but the past. Any one who attempts creative effort without using the past as a point of departure is doomed to wander in very short circles.

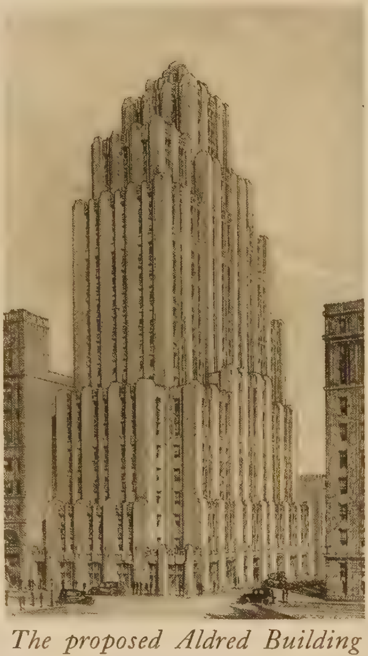
Every man owes some of his time to the upbuilding of the industry or profession to which he belongs.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

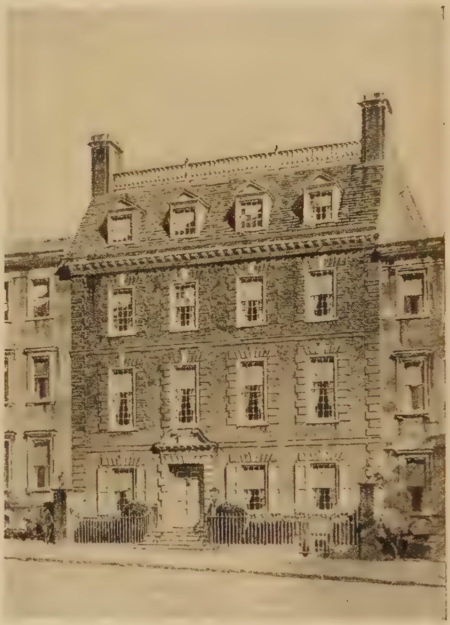


Baltimore's City College, located upon a hill in the northeast corner of the city. Buckler & Fenhagen, architects

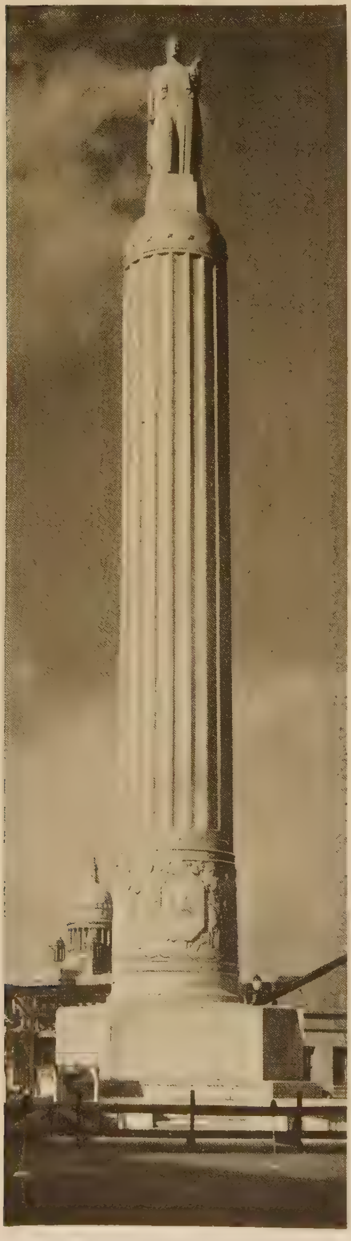
Architectural News



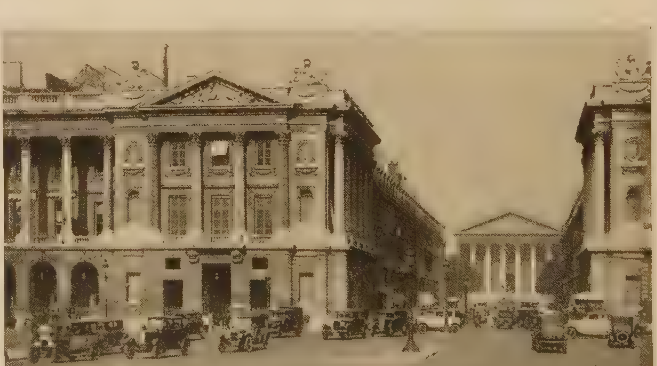
The proposed Aldred Building to be erected in Montreal, from the design of Barott & Blackader, architects



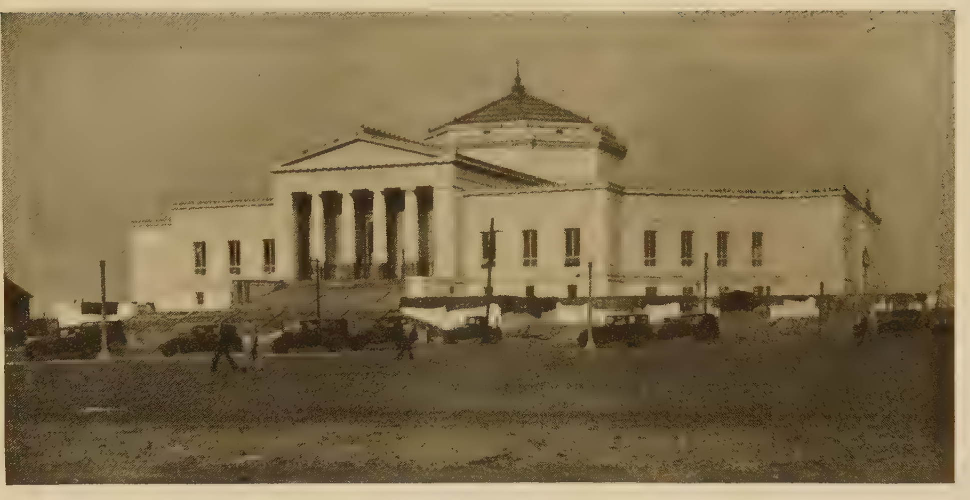
The new headquarters building for the Society of Colonial Dames, East Seventy-first Street, New York City. Richard H. Dana, Jr., architect



The Providence War Memorial. Paul Cret, architect; Paul Jennewein, sculptor

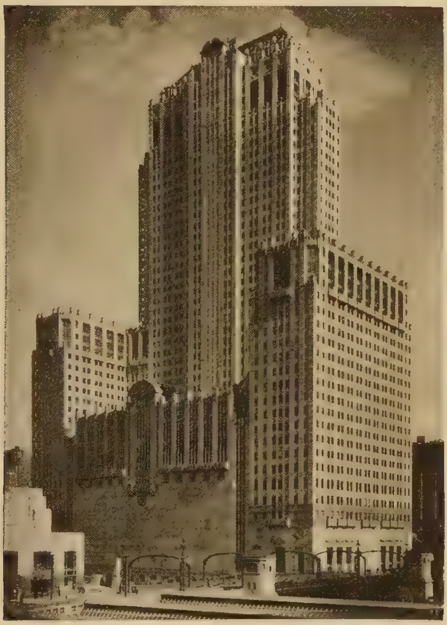


Hotel de Coislin, Place de la Concorde, Paris, to house the Guaranty Trust Co. Cross & Cross, architects



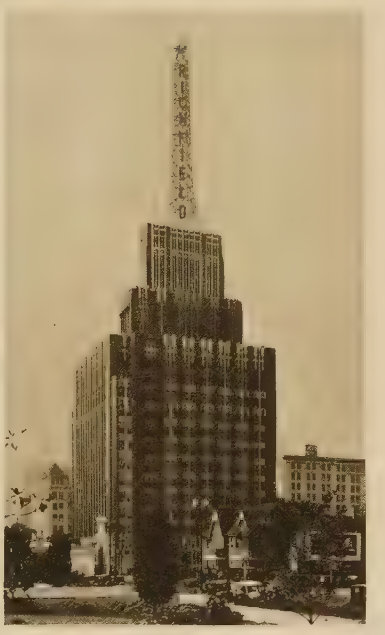
The new John G. Shedd Aquarium, nearing completion on Chicago's water-front near the Art Museum. Graham, Anderson, Probst & White, architects

in Photographs

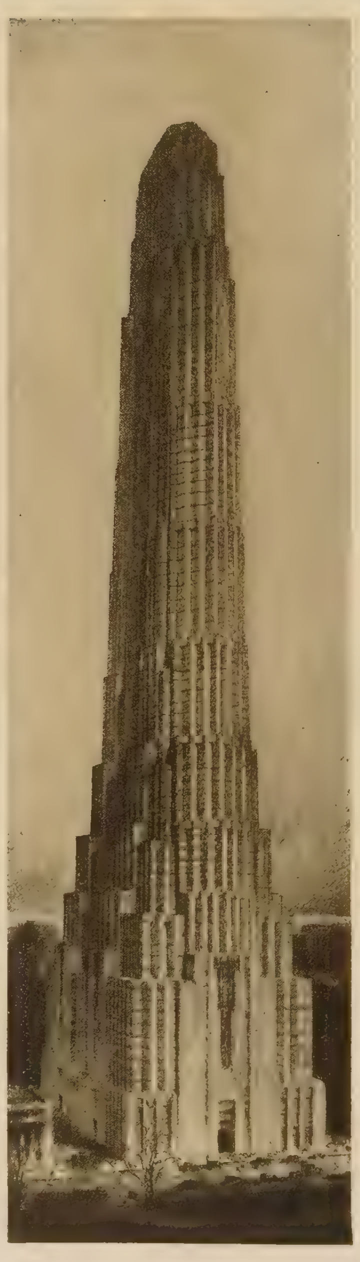


From Ewing Galloway, New York

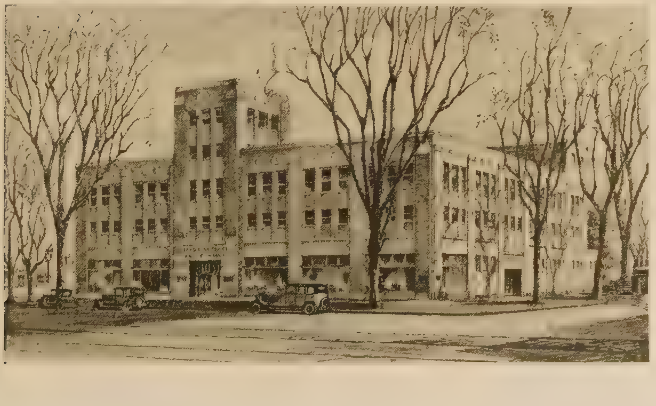
The new Civic Opera House, Chicago, river side. Graham, Anderson, Probst & White, architects



Los Angeles's new Richfield Oil Building, in black and gold terra-cotta. Morgan, Walls & Clements, architects



The proposed Metropolitan Life Tower, New York. Dan Everett Waid and Harvey Wiley Corbett, architects



Another Sears Roebuck Building, for Syracuse, N. Y. Nimmons, Carr & Wright, architects

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BOOK REVIEWS

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN SCULPTURE. 352 pages, 8 by 11 inches. Issued for the Exhibition held by The National Sculpture Society in co-operation with the Trustees of the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, 1929. New York: 1929: The National Sculpture Society. $1.75.

A series of biographical sketches of sculptors represented in the California Outdoor Exhibition, April to December 31, 1929, with photographic illustrations from their recent works.

DESIGN AND CONTROL OF CONCRETE MIXTURES. Third edition. 71 pages, 6 by 9 inches. Pamphlet binding. New York: 1929: Portland Cement Association.

EARLY CHURCH ART IN NORTHERN EUROPE. With Special Reference to Timber Construction and Decoration. By Josef Strzygowski. 172 pages, 6¼ by 9½ inches. Illustrations from photographs and drawings. New York: 1929: Harper & Bros. $8.

The author, who is Professor of Art History in the University of Vienna, has filled a real gap in architectural literature by this scholarly analysis of wooden architecture in Europe.

CODE FOR PROTECTION AGAINST LIGHTNING. 114 pages, 5 by 7½ inches. Illustrated from photographs. Pamphlet binding. Bureau of Standards, Washington: 1929: U. S. Government Printing Office. 25 cents.

The first attempt, so far as we know, to investigate the value and efficiency of the lightning rod and its substitutes.

INVESTIGATION OF HEATING ROOMS WITH DIRECT STEAM RADIATORS EQUIPPED WITH ENCLOSURES AND SHIELDS. By Arthur C. Willard, Alonzo P. Kratz, Maurice K. Fahnestock, and Seichi Konzo. 72 pages, 6 by 9 inches. Illustrated from photographs and drawings. Pamphlet binding. Urbana, Ill.: 1929: University of Illinois. 40 cents.

Summarizing the work of many months by representatives of heating and plumbing men co-operating with the University of Illinois.

TRANSMISSION OF SOUND THROUGH WALL AND FLOOR STRUCTURES. By V. L. Chrisler and W. F. Snyder. 19 pages, 5¾ by 9 inches. Illustrated from photographs and drawings. Pamphlet binding. Bureau of Standards, Washington: 1929: U. S. Government Printing Office. 10 cents.

ROADSIDE DEVELOPMENT. By J. M. Bennett. 265 pages, 5¼ by 7¾ inches. Illustrated with photographs and diagrams. New York: 1929: The Macmillan Company. $5.

A volume in the Land Economics Series providing definite information for the use of landscape designers concerned with highway design.

SOME ABSORPTION PROPERTIES OF CLAY BRICK. By L. A. Palmer. 23 pages, 5¾ by 9 inches. Pamphlet binding. Bureau of Standards, Washington: 1929: U. S. Government Printing Office. 10 cents.

EDIFICES DE ROME MODERNE. By Paul Letarouilly. Vol. II. Palais et Maisons. 16 pages of text and 56 plates from drawings, 10 by 14¾ inches. Printed in Great Britain. London: n. d.: John Tiranti & Co. 7s. 6d.

The excellent reprint of this architectural classic is the second volume of a series which is to be completed in six volumes. One to four will cover *Palais et Maisons*, five and six, *Eglises et Convents*.

GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUBS. By Clifford Charles Wendehack. 56 pages of text and 158 plates from photographs, plans, and perspectives, 9¼ by 13 inches. New York: 1929: William Helburn, Inc. $15.

Mr. Wendehack's extensive experience in country club design is well known in the profession. He has gathered here a representative lot of clubs, large and small, for golf, yachting, and other purposes—an interesting collection for both the profession and the public.

GEORGIAN ART: 1760–1820. 69 pages of text and 70 plates from photographs and drawings. Frontispiece in color, 9½ by 12 inches. Printed in Great Britain. New York: 1929: Charles Scribner's Sons. $10.

An editorial board under the auspices of *The Burlington Magazine* has compiled this review of English painting, architecture, ceramics, glass, metalwork, furniture, textiles, and other arts of the period.

SZUKALSKI: PROJECTS IN DESIGN. 53 pages of text and 162 plates from photographs and drawings, 10¾ by 12 inches. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press: 1929. $20.

As Roger A. Crane says in his introduction to this book, "Stanislaw Szukalski is either worshipped or condemned—never treated with indifference." Here is a record of the Polish sculptor's individualistic productions.

ARCHITECTURE'S PORTFOLIO

OF

SPANDRELS

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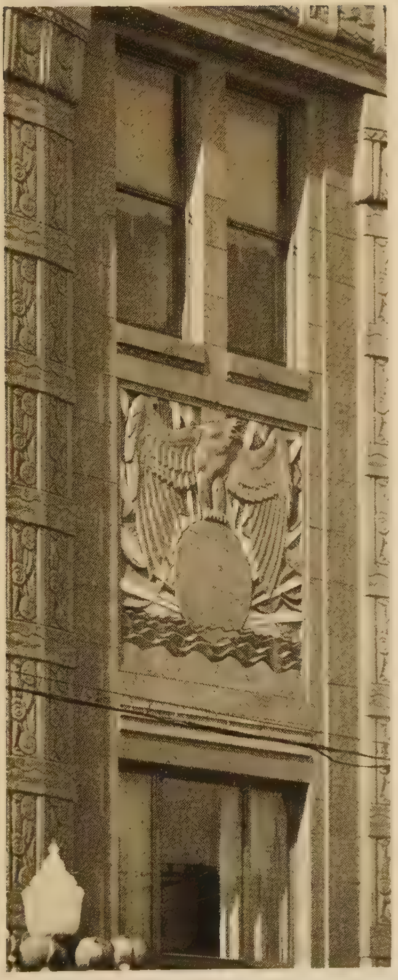

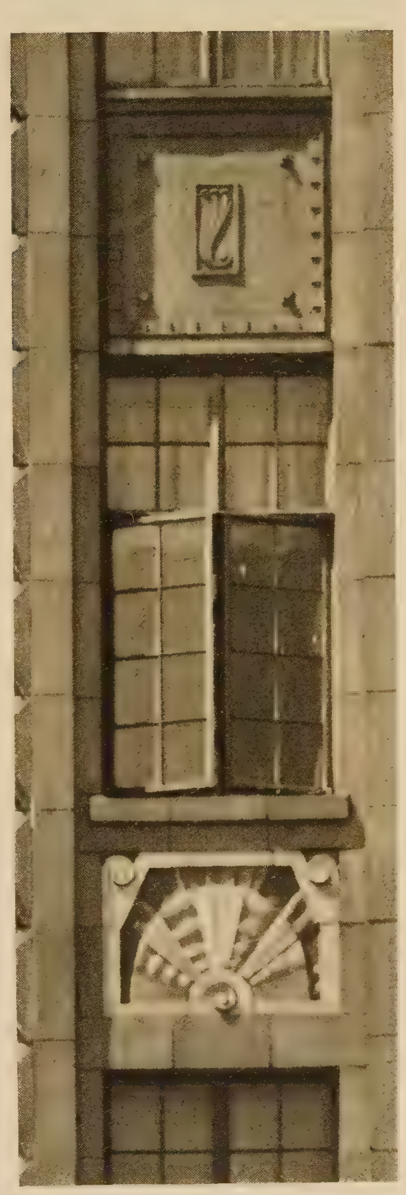

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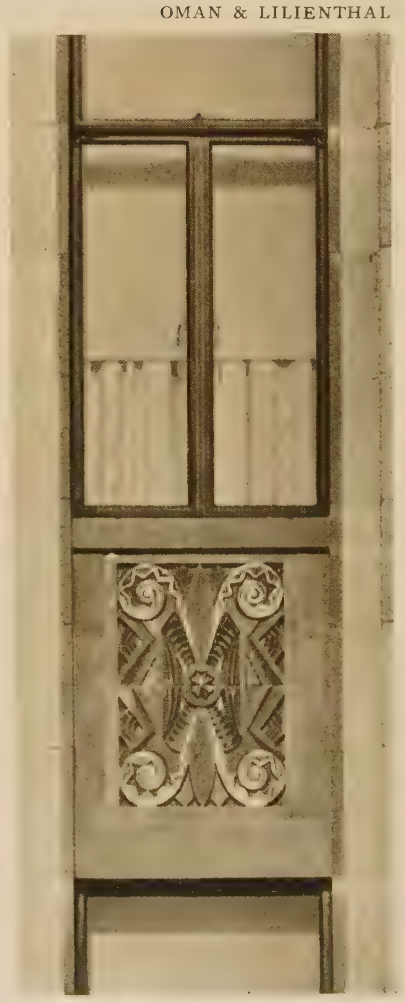

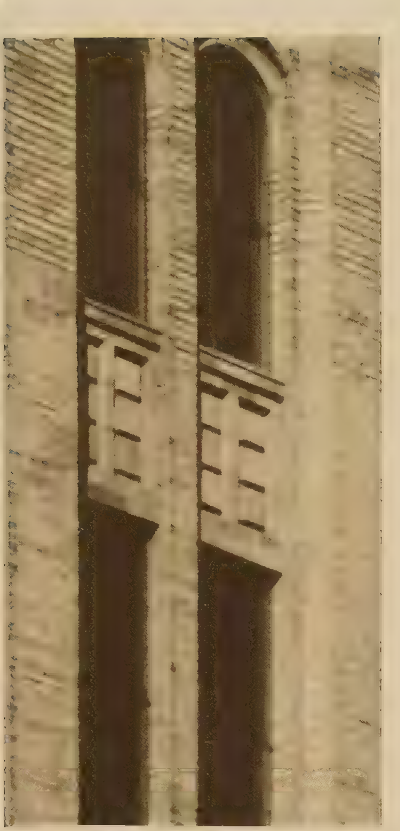

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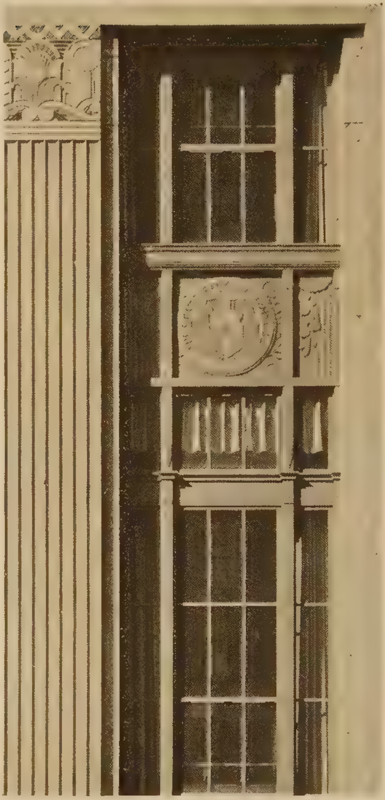

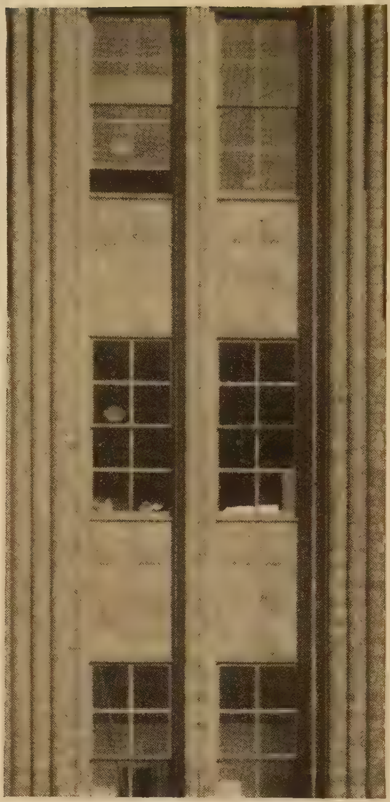

LEAD PANELS IN METAL FRAME
STARRETT & VAN VLECK

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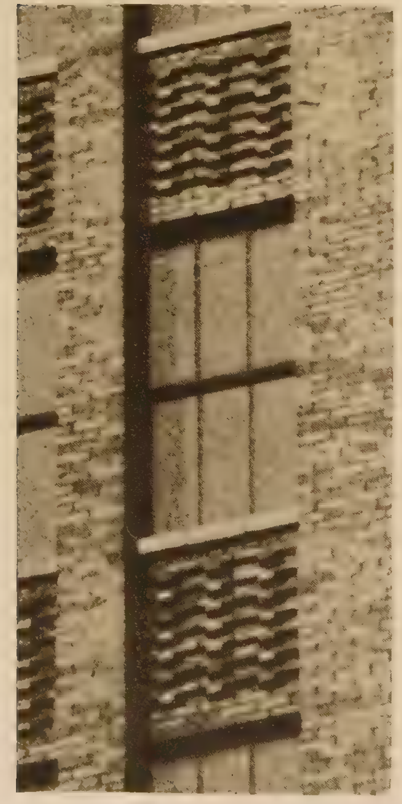

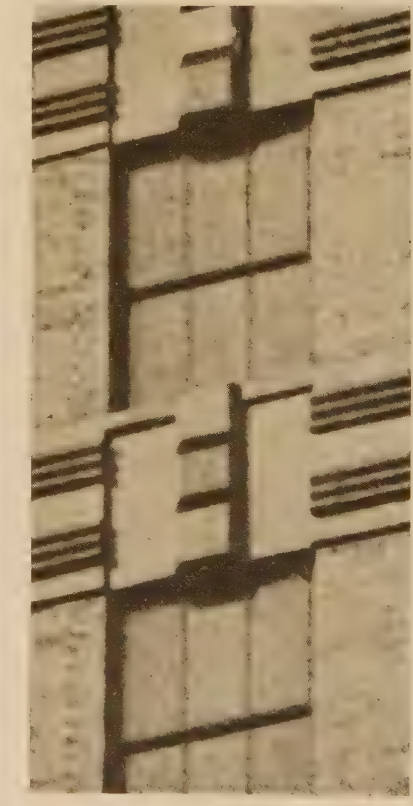

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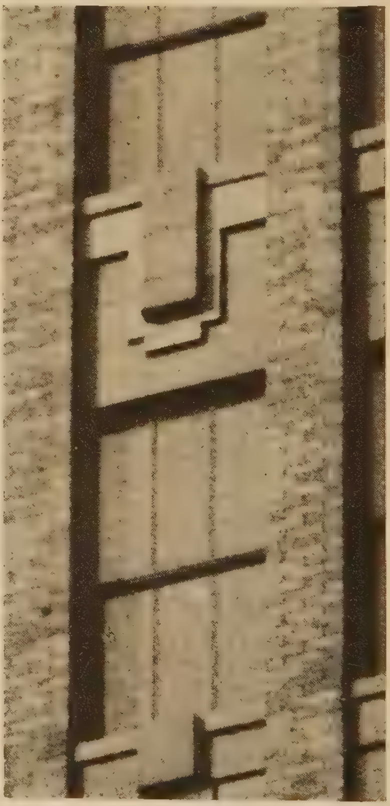

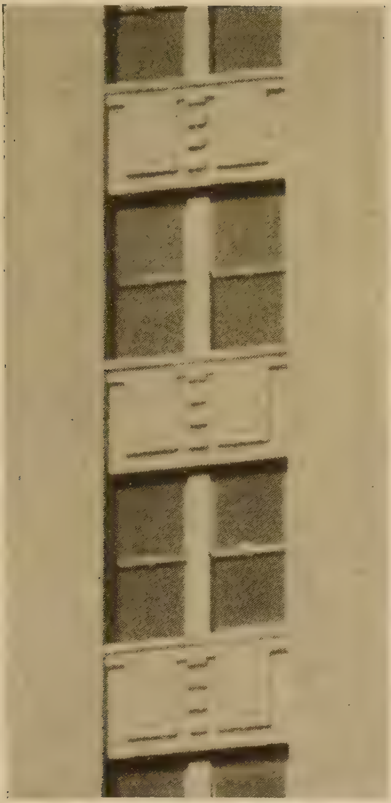

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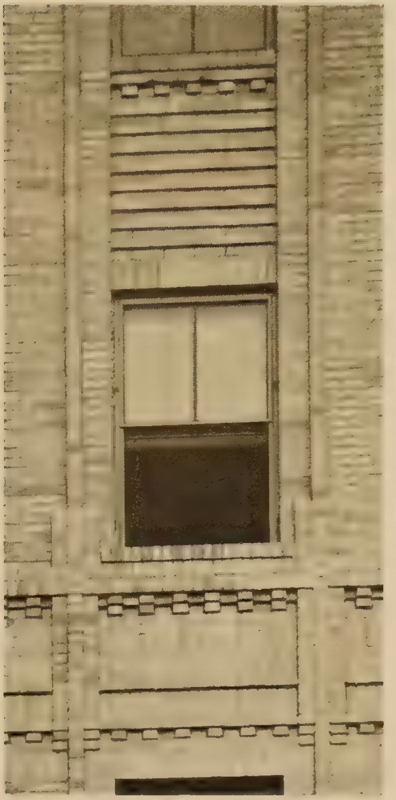
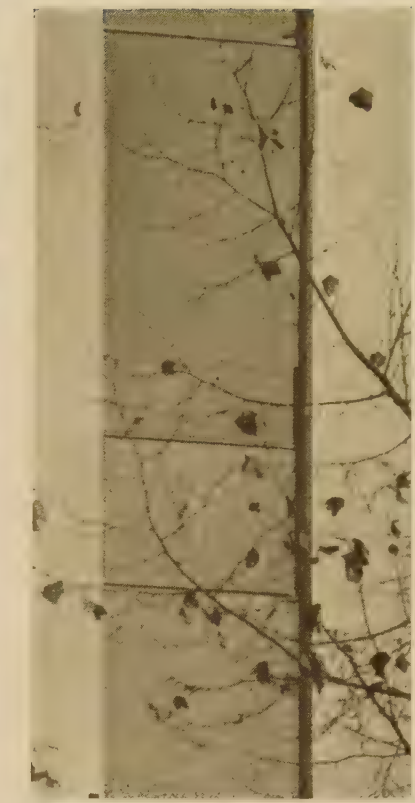
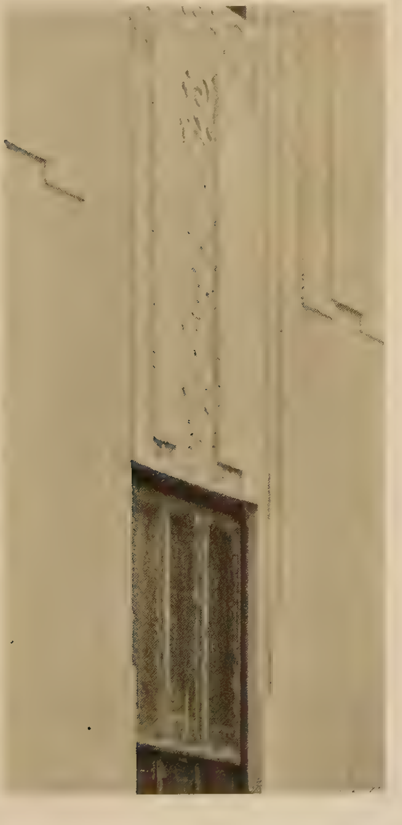
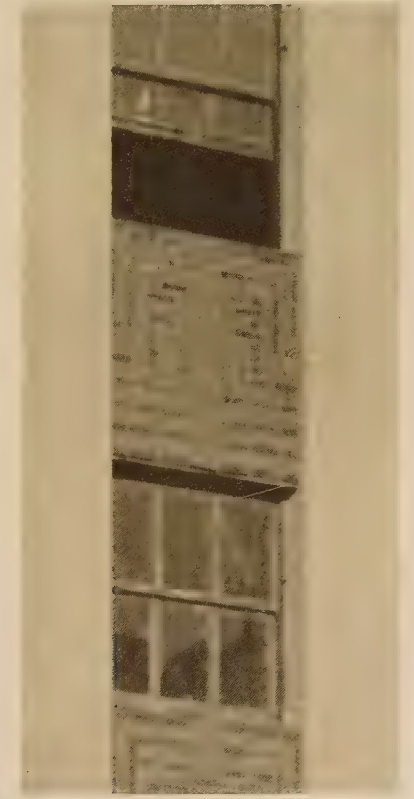




CAST IRON
GEORGE RAY

LIMESTONE
VOORHEES, GMELIN & WALKER





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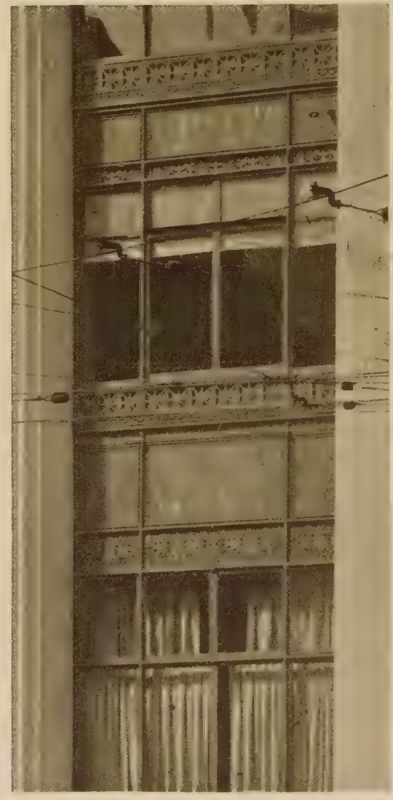

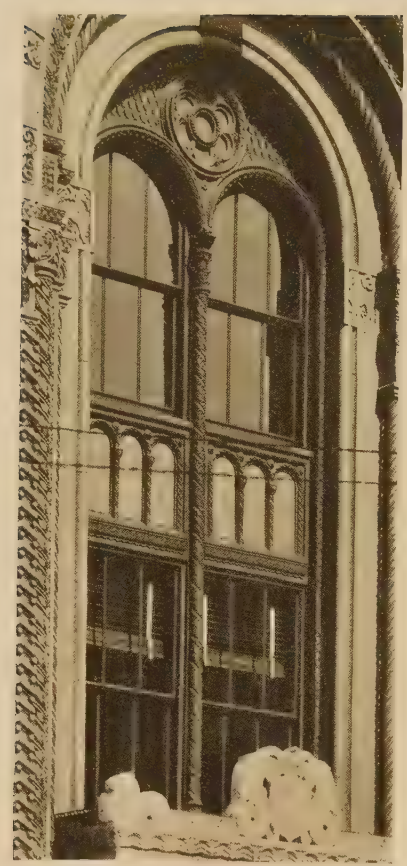

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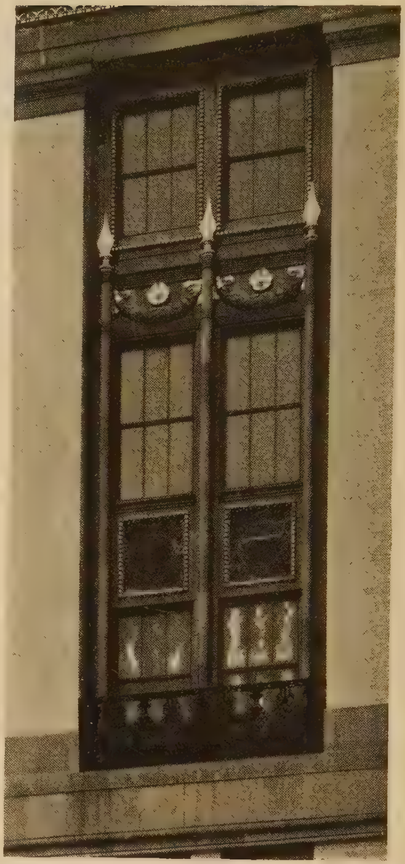
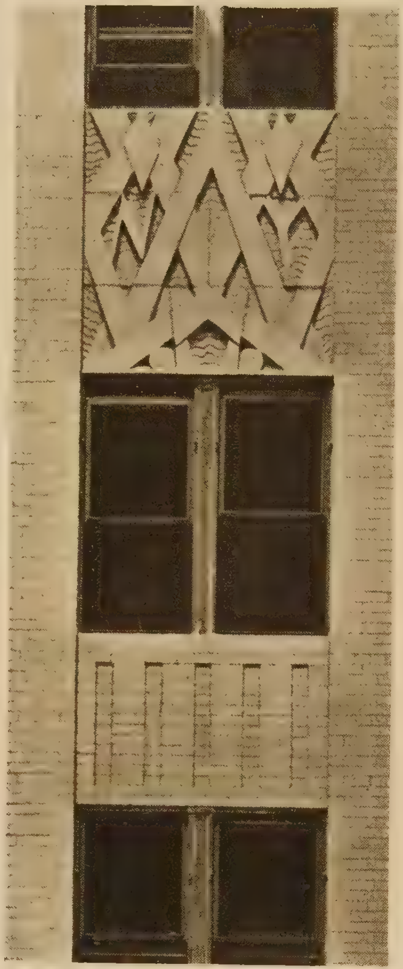
& GRYLLS



GREEN AND GOLD
GLAZED TERRA-COTTA
McKIM, MEAD
& WHITE



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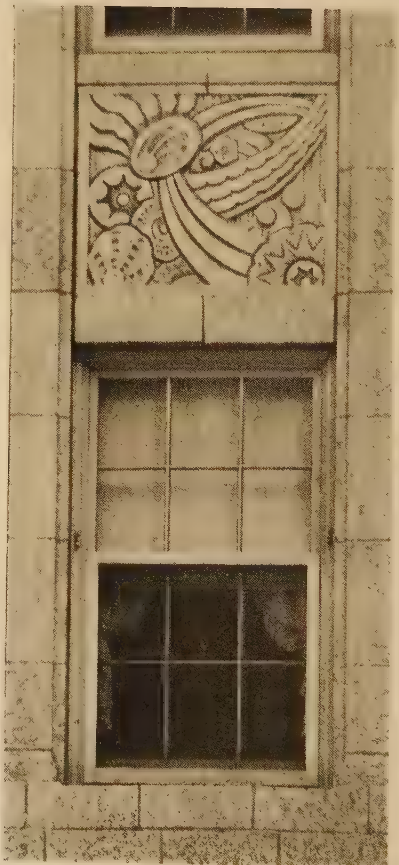
SUGARMAN & BERGER



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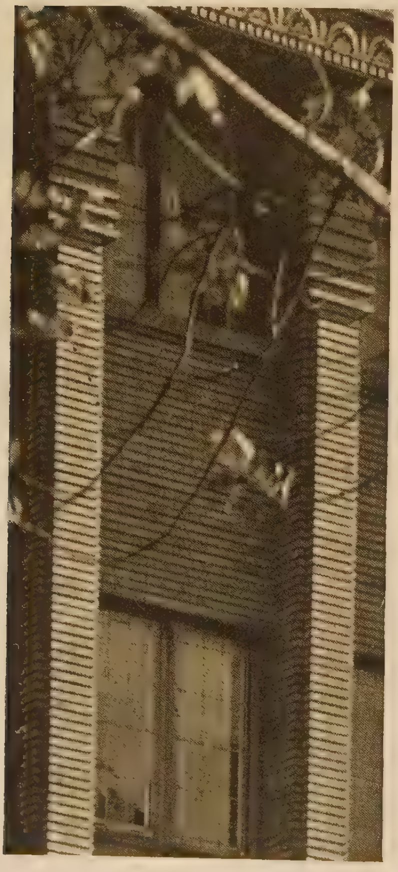
& QUINN



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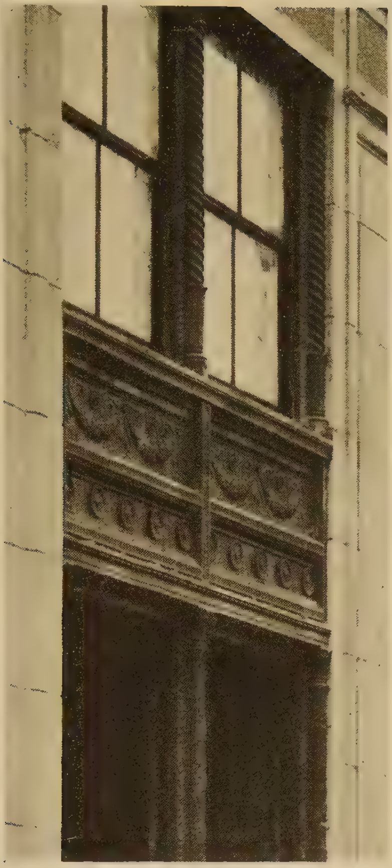

BLACK TERRA-COTTA
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HASTINGS

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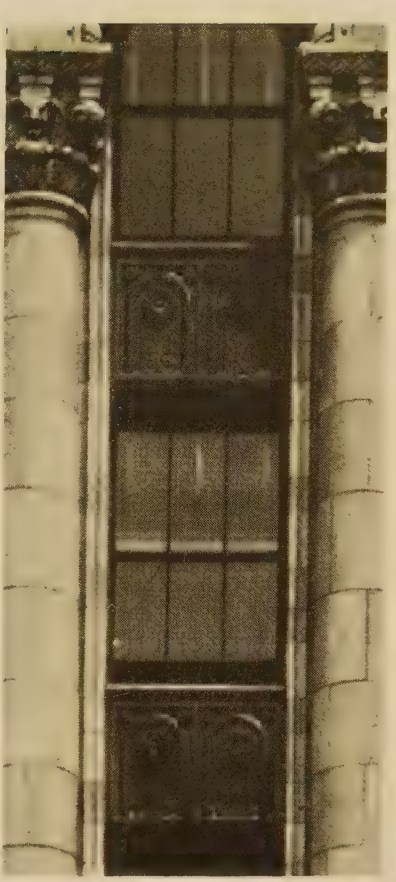
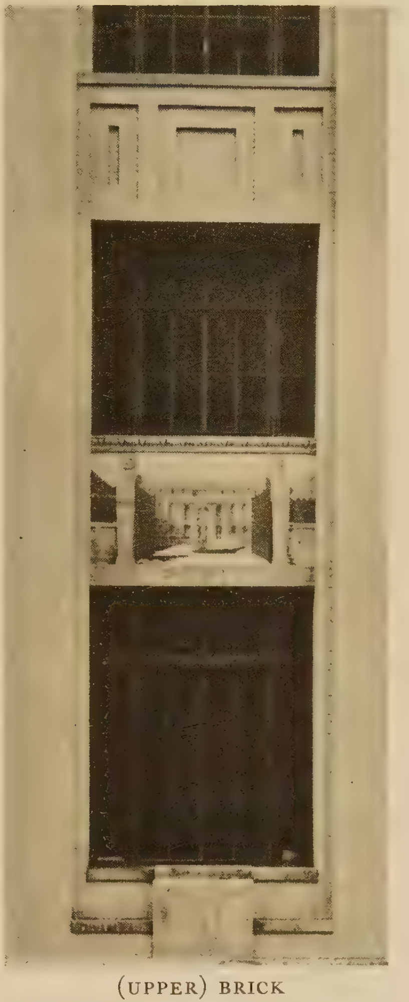
SMITH, HINCHMAN
& GRYLLS





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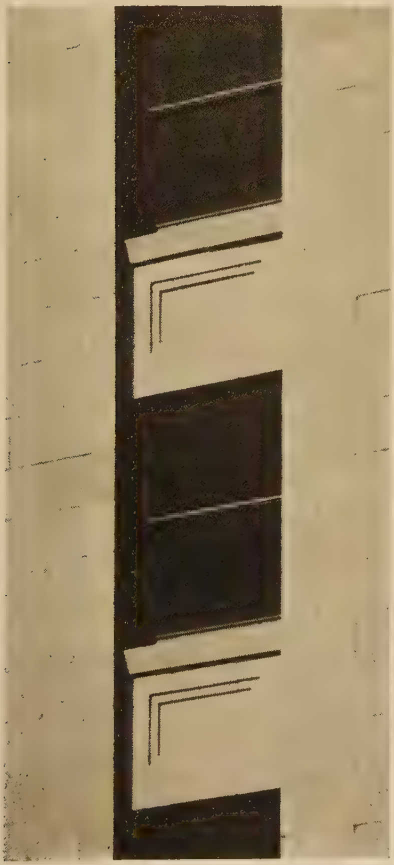

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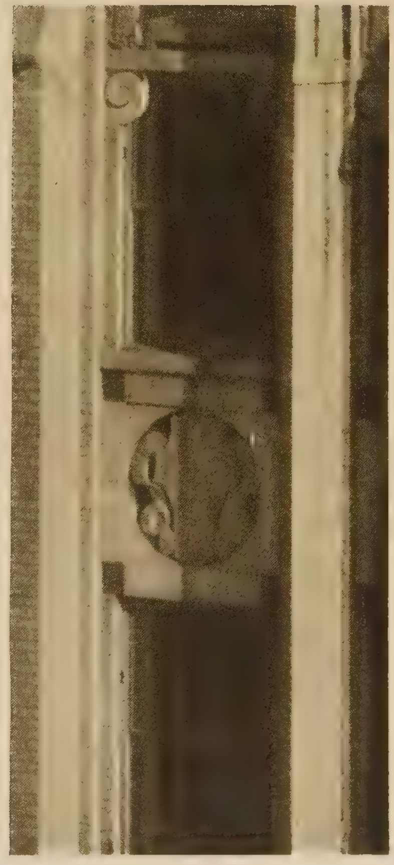

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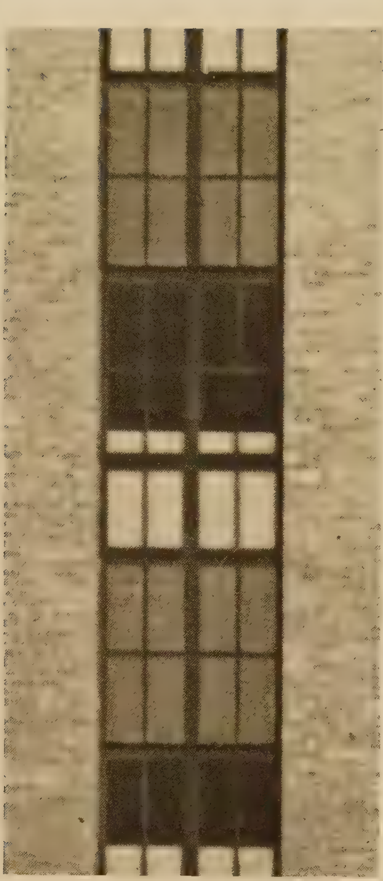
& HIRONS



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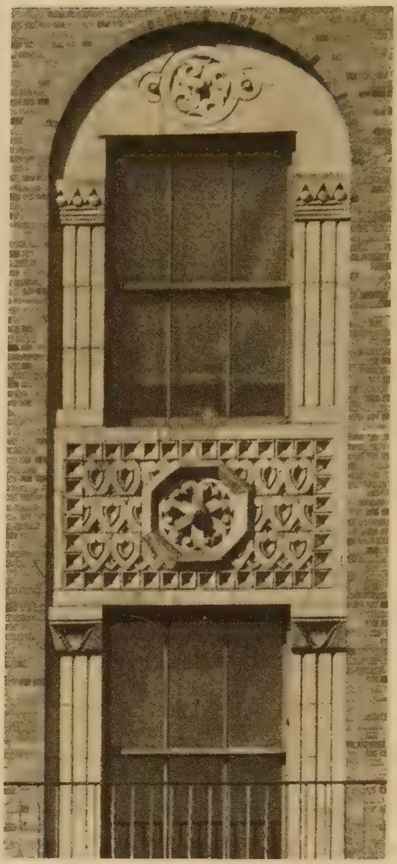

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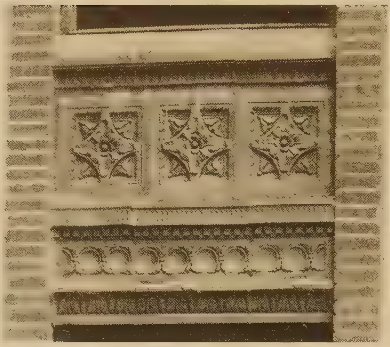

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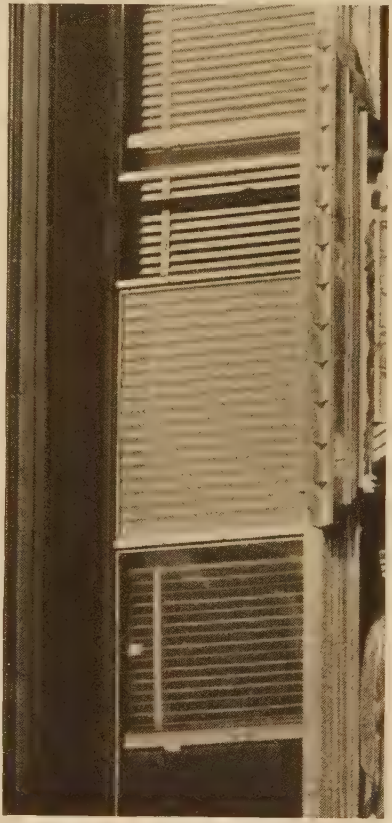
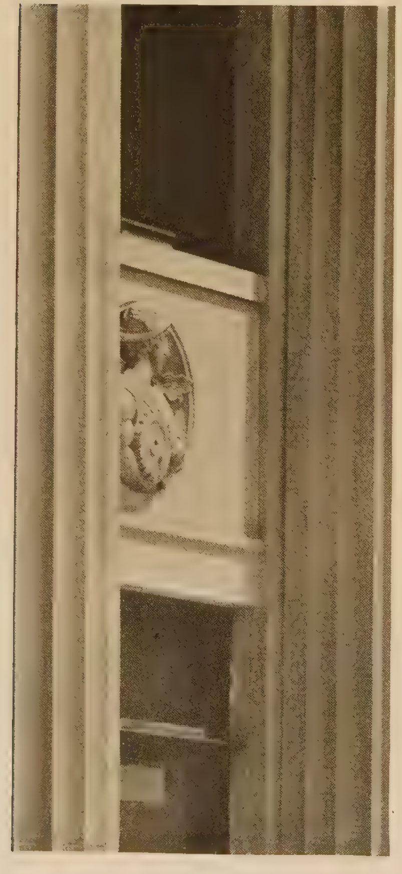
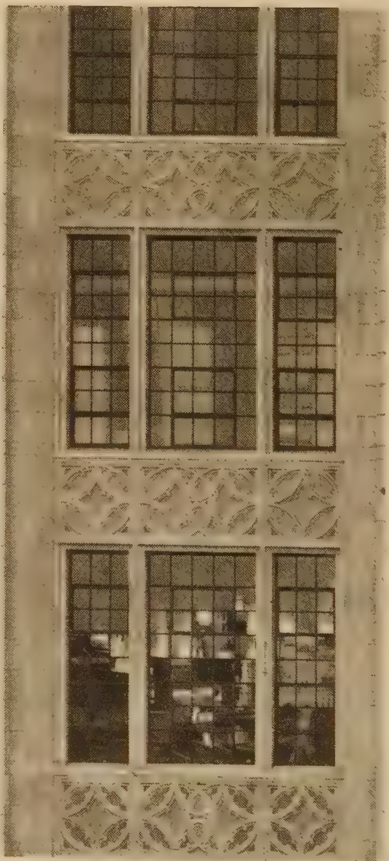
CARRÈRE & HASTINGS



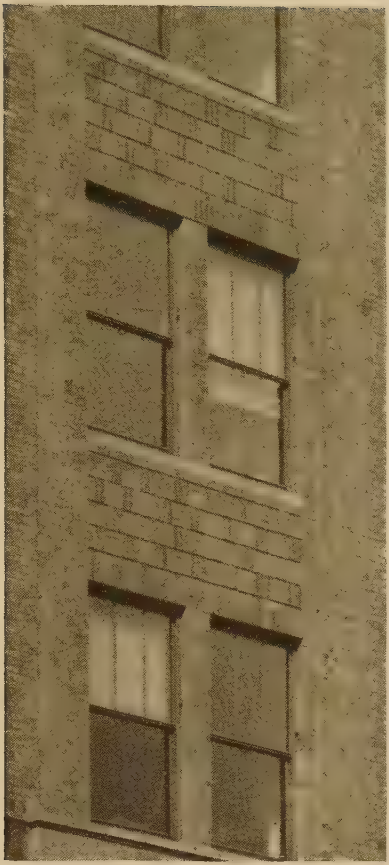
SUGGESTION OF VENETIAN BLIND
PATTERN UNDER GLASS
MORGAN, WALLS & CLEMENTS



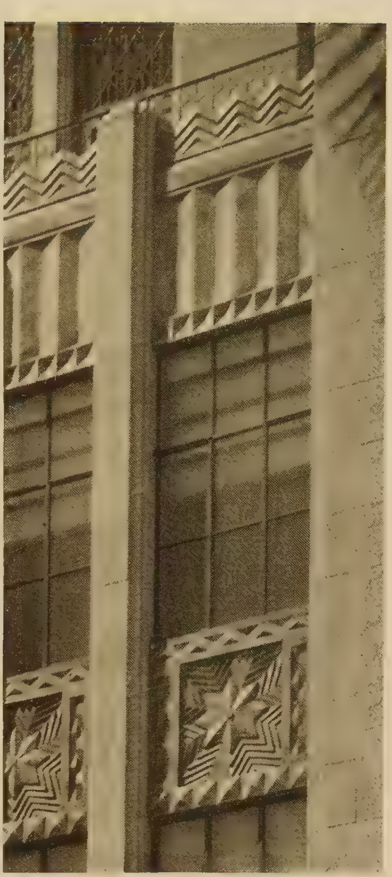
LIMESTONE
ALBERT KAHN, INC.



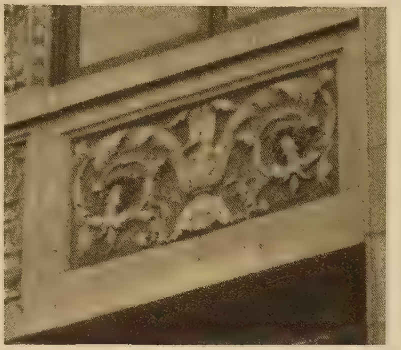
POLYCHROME TERRA-COTTA
OWEN & CLARKE



BRICK
LUDLOW & PEABODY



TERRA-COTTA
JNO. AND DONALD B. PARKINSON



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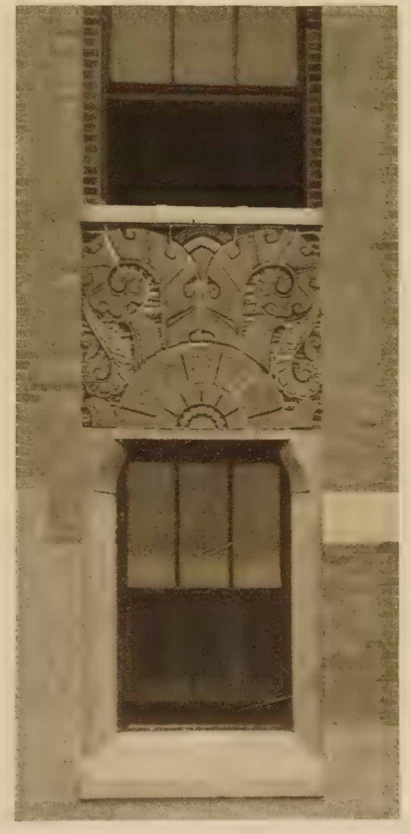
DAVID SHAPIRO



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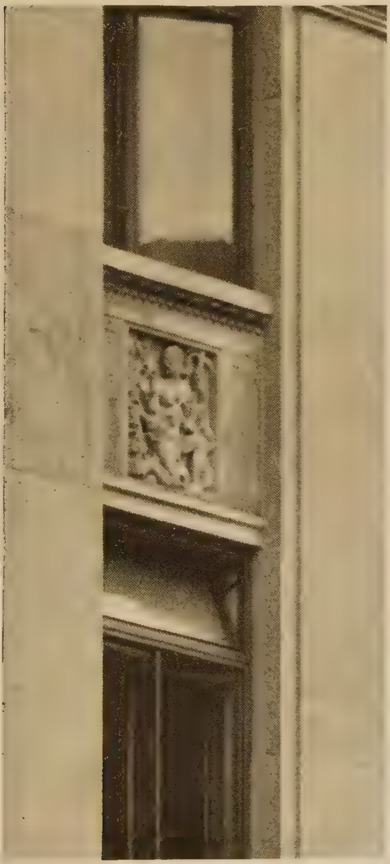
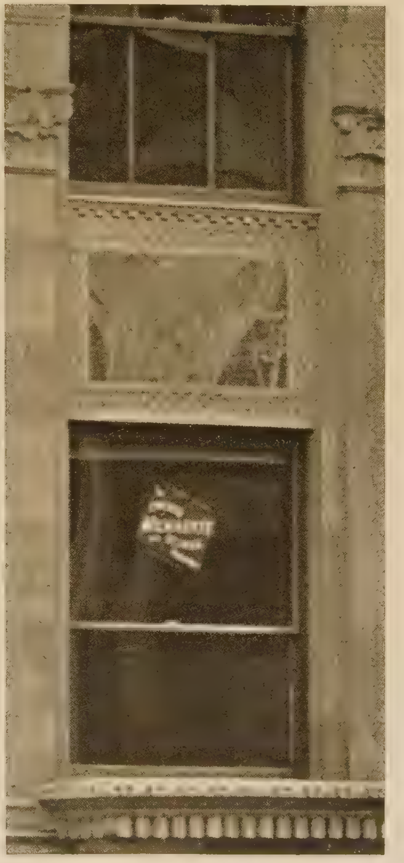
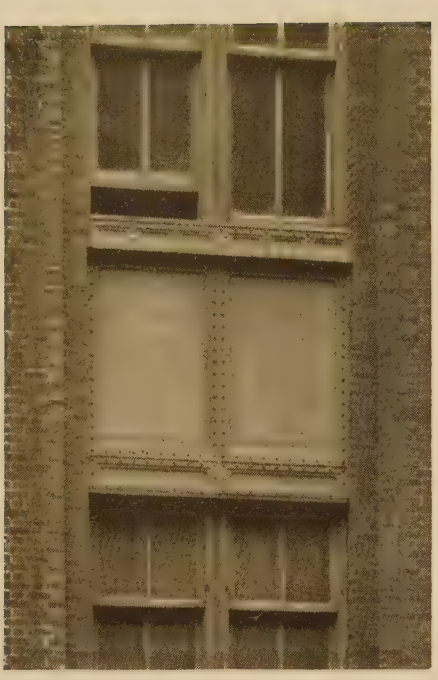
DENNISON & HIRONS



CAST CEMENT
HOLABIRD & ROCHE

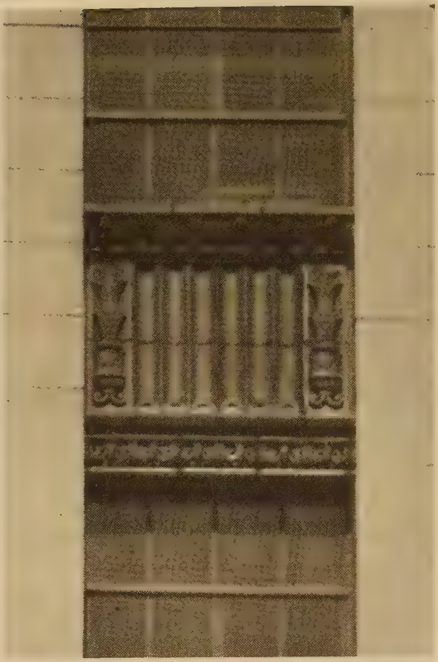


MARBLE AND LIMESTONE
STARRETT & VAN VLECK

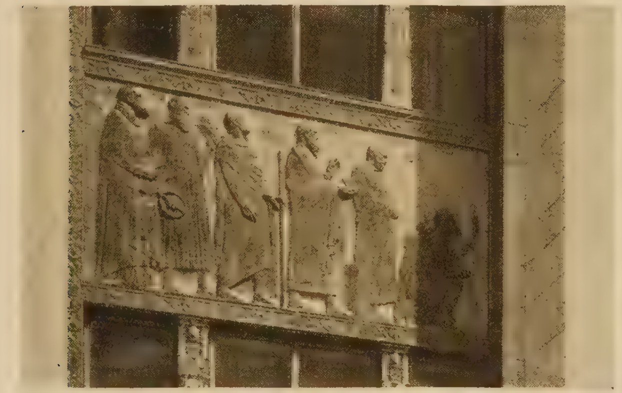


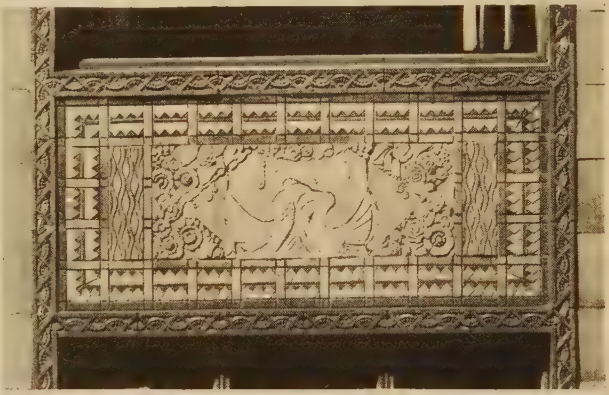
RIVETED STEEL
REED & STEM
WARREN & WETMORE

TERRA-COTTA
ALBERT KAHN, INC.
FRANK S. PARKER,
ASSOCIATE

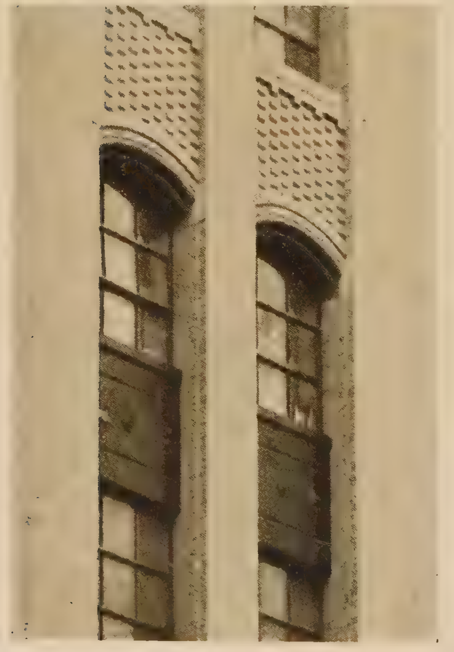


BELOW AT LEFT, BRONZE
BERTRAM G. GOODHUE

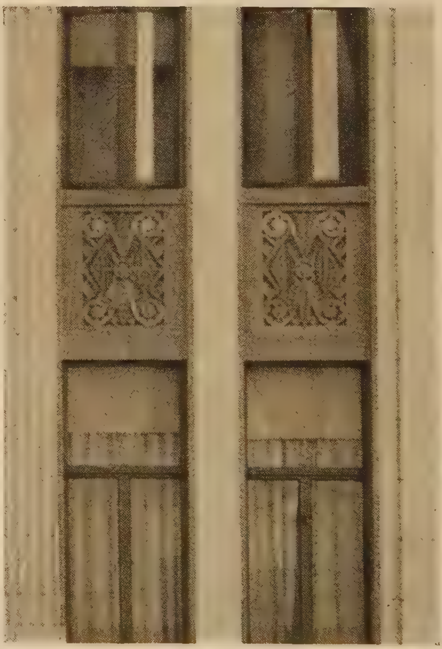




ABOVE AT RIGHT,
POLYCHROME TERRA-COTTA
B. LEO STEIF & CO.



UPPER, BRICK
LOWER, SOAPSTONE
JAMES GAMBLE ROGERS



TERRA-COTTA
OMAN & LILIENTHAL

The Editor's Diary

Saturday, October 26.—Willis H. Church, on a trip around the world, writes from Peking as follows:

"We enjoyed Japan very much. This was especially true of the smaller cities and more especially Nikko, Kyoto, and Nara. Tokyo and Yokohama, since the day of the earthquake, have become completely modernized. You would enjoy running a few pages in ARCHITECTURE under the caption 'Is Modern German Architecture Worse in Japan than It Is in Germany?' The answer is: 'Impossible—it only looks worse.'

"Nikko, on the other hand, is a beauty. While the buildings are heavy in proportion and the line and composition not good, the brilliance of the lacquers (red, green, blue, black, and gold) overweighs the design. Coupled with the sparkling color are the great vistas one gets up long avenues of wonderful cryptomeria trees, the deep shadows, the brilliant splashes of sunlight and a background of steep hills covered with dense foliage.

"Peking is so fascinating that we have wired to Shanghai and moved our passage to Hongkong and Saigon back two weeks. Amazing street scenes, misspelled signs in English of all sorts, such as 'Cleaning, Dying and Pressing and Company.' Another reads 'Woollen clothes, Glmtlemans Taildr.'

"The Forbidden City, Winter Palaces, Temple of Heaven are marvellous. Grand in conception, fortress-like walls, massive towers, heavy gates which are ponderously swung shut at night. Majestic in proportion, splendor of surrounding buildings, are but inadequate terms to be applied to these old masterpieces."

Monday, October 28.—Wandered into the old Waldorf-Astoria, now fast becoming mere débris. Through the magic of my friend Colonel W. A. Starrett's name I wangled out of the demolition crew a few sets of the mahogany inside blinds which I shall use to cover the bookshelves of our architectural library here in the office. If one could secure enough of them they would serve very well to panel a room.

Wednesday, October 30.—William A. Payne tells me that acceptance of the *Standard Specifications* supplied by the New York Building Congress is proceeding very slowly. Curious, since it is such an obviously effective tool for the use of the profession. However, knowledge of these things seems to percolate slowly and in curious ways; they find that the General Conditions of the A. I. A. are almost unknown in Philadelphia specifications, though in general use throughout the country.

Thursday, October 31.—Lunched with Aymar Embury and caught some of the contagion of his enthusiastic admiration of Mayan architecture and sculpture. If we had but the slightest conception of what is to be seen on the peninsula of Yucatan, Embury believes that the great stream of architectural pilgrims would be diverted there from its present path across the Atlantic. Here was a great civilization, appearing about 600 B. C., achieving its most brilliant period about 300–600 A. D., after which, for some unknown reason—civil war, social decadence, failure of food supply, or some overwhelming epidemic such as yellow fever—the people left the great cities of carved stone, to begin life elsewhere. Here was a peace-loving agricultural people who knew not so great a factor in civilization as the wheel, who knew nothing of metals, excepting gold and copper in the making of ornaments of the later Empire, yet who developed a calendar system that for accuracy is not equalled by our own Gregorian calendar. They knew not the arch, they were timid even in the use of the lintel, yet they built temples and palaces of carved limestone, laid in cement, with a breadth of conception and a magnificence of scale that shames us of to-day. Their carvings attained an abstract conventionalization that is matched perhaps only in the highest Chinese art. Why is it that with this great treasure house so near us we remain so unfamiliar with its wonders?

Saturday, November 2.—Lunched at The League with Ernest Born, and afterward down to his studio on 12th Street to see some drawings he had made abroad—in various combinations of sanguine, bistre, black crayon, and water-color.. A marvellous collection, marked by an innate feeling for the significant architectural forms together with the boldness of indication that the illustrator sometimes achieves, but which in most architectural renderings is replaced by an insistence upon recording all the detail. Brought four of the sketches in sanguine back to the office to reproduce in facsimile as frontispieces.

Wednesday, November 6.—Met the editors of the architectural journals at the monthly luncheon at The League, where the talk was of how the group could be enlarged to include men who write of the Fine Arts in the magazines and newspapers, with the purpose of securing a wider dissemination of architectural knowledge in the public mind.

Thursday, November 7.—Journeyed over to a studio at the North River end of 24th Street to see the stained-glass windows which George Pearse Ennis has just completed for the Methodist Episcopal Church Home at Riverdale, N. Y., under Julius Gregory's architectural direction, but lost the taxicab race with waning daylight, so that I must go up to Riverdale after the windows are in place.

Back to The League to join in honoring M. Jean Labatut at a dinner and exhibition of his drawings for the Prix de Rome and other competitive efforts. Raymond Hood presided and called upon Professor Morey and Shirley Morgan, of the Princeton architectural school, where M. Labatut is teaching design; upon Kenneth Murchison, who added his characteristic note of gaiety to the occasion; upon Harvey Corbett, who reminisced of student days at the École; upon Julian Clarence Levi, who paid a gracious tribute to the debt owed to France by all art-loving peoples; upon M. Garreau-Dombasle, representing the French Embassy; and upon M. Labatut, who, in his own tongue, gave a logical résumé of what he conceives to be the essentials of the architect's approach to a problem in design. Seventy or eighty men had come to join in honoring M. Labatut and to inspect the technic and draftsmanship of his notable drawings.

Saturday, November 9.—Edwin Bergstrom says that architects in the United States are receiving fees of not less than $80,000,000 a year. It seems very little when one divides the total by, say, 10,000 architects.

Monday, November 11.—Lunched with Mark Barr at the Century, where we met Egerton Swartwout and commiserated the passing of Thomas Hastings, brilliant architect and even more brilliant contributor to the joys of human relationship.

Tuesday, November 12.—Charles H. Cheney, chairman of the A. I. A.'s City and Regional Planning Committee, says that American cities are 90 per cent ugly, and that the percentage of new buildings which are really good is not increasing. Some of our own observations lead us to think that the really good ones are becoming very scarce, and that Mr. Cheney's percentage may be an underestimate of the situation.

Wednesday, November 13.—William F. Lockhardt in with a batch of photographs out of the far West—mostly of work which both of us had inspected under construction this past summer and which has but recently been completed. They seem to have a more sympathetic feeling for terra-cotta and its logical uses out there than is common in the East. It seems rather a pity that terra-cotta should be made to pinch-hit for stone in the latter material's traditional forms; why not give it a chance to be terra-cotta?

Thursday, November 14.—Joined Alfred Morton Githens, Edward L. Tilton, and Magonigle in The League at luncheon. Githens, for whom I had the pleasure of niggering when he won the John Stewardson Travelling Scholarship, had come in particularly to inspect Labatut's Prix de Rome drawings and admired their ingenious and fresh use of the classic forms.

Another interesting and stimulating evening at The League upon the subject, "Art and the Machine." Ely Jacques Kahn presided and correlated three particularly pertinent view-points: Frederick Carder, of the Corning Glass Works, representing the designer-craftsman; Sidney Blumenthal, of the Shelton Looms, representing the forward-looking manufacturer; and Samuel Raeburn, head of Lord & Taylor, whose close touch with and study of the buying public formed the third vital link in the chain. Ralph Walker, Leon Solon, Walter W. Kantack, and others joined in the discussion. There is no doubt that this is a machine age, which is but to say that man's hand and brain have been supplemented by a multitude of tools which he is learning rapidly to control. Most of us no longer hold to the old fetish that hand work *per se* is inherently better than machine work. There is hardly such a thing as hand work, strictly speaking; even the sculptor uses tools, the painter, brushes. So modern machine work is nothing more than hand work produced with superior tools. One difficulty is that we are not able to direct these more complex tools with the complete control that we had learned in the use of simpler tools; but that will come. Nevertheless, agreeing with all of the above, I seemed to be a minority of one—unless perhaps Mr. Carder was with me—in contending that the increasing use of the machine, with inevitable quantity production, is giving all of us the same possessions. Julie O'Grady and the Colonel's Lady may both have the same cigarette case of machined silver, the same string of near-pearls. Mr. Raeburn says that this is America and that we must expect this levelling process and be glad of it. And yet who is there among us who does not prize the unique production—the bit of carved jade, the Manship bronze? When these are produced by the thousand or million through the use of the machine, though losing nothing in perfection of execution, will we still prize them? Surely not. There is in mankind an ineradicable desire for the precious thing, the unique work of art. When every one else can have it, when we see it in the homes of all our neighbors and on Julie O'Grady's whatnot, we shall desire it no longer. There are plenty of things, the result of the machine, that we do accept without demur—automobiles, refrigerators, radios, staple products in which we expect meticulous perfection of execution—perhaps even a sort of least-common-denominator of art, but there are, and will remain, other things—the really lovely works of the artist and the craftsman—that must never meet the devastating touch of quantity production. How this is to be achieved in such products of the artist and craftsman as fabrics, furniture, wall coverings, rugs, and the like is a question to which for me there is as yet no satisfactory answer. We all want the designer and the craftsman to put their best into these things. When they do so successfully they must be produced in quantity to bring the cost within reach. When they are produced in quantity we shall no longer prize them. What is the answer?

* * *

Friday, November 15.—Spent an hour with Buckminster Fuller, hearing of his unceasing activities in making known to the world his Dymaxion House and the philosophy which prompted its design. Spent another hour with Wesley Bessell, looking over photographs of his work, work that is never unmarked by evidences of his individualistic touch in design. Made an engagement with him for next April, when the trees are in just the right stage of leaf-bud laciness, to go upon a photographic pilgrimage in the hope of capturing on film some of the elusive charm in one of his country houses.

With Milton Lowenstein to evening service in Temple Emanu-el, recently completed on Fifth Avenue at 65th Street by Robert D. Kohn, Charles Butler, and Clarence S. Stein, with Mayers, Murray & Phillip acting as consultants. The interior is an enormous auditorium, rectangular in plan and of great height, the concrete beams and trusses of the ceiling painted in gold and rich color. A matt-surface tile is used for the walls, with a narrow glazed tile used almost as a joint. The reflection of light in thin verticals from these glazed tiles gives a curious effect of transmitted light through what is apparently a stone screen. There are no lighting fixtures, the auditorium being lighted from powerful spot-lights set in the ceiling and pointing straight down. The aisles, being of light marbles, reflect too much of this; one wonders why a dark floor was not used. A high arch in the front, exquisitely done in marble mosaic (which, however, becomes evident only upon close inspection), encloses the organ grille and the choir gallery above the ark. There has been, apparently, no lack of means to build a magnificent temple here. Somehow the result, while impressive in its grandeur, seems just to miss being a great achievement. Whether the chief lack is in the abandonment of too many Hebrew traditions, or whether the lighting is at fault, is not clear to me.

Monday, November 18.—New York seems to be considerably exercised over the present triple race for achieving the world's altitude record in building. H. Craig Severance's Bank of the Manhattan Building, at 40 Wall Street, called originally for a height of 925 feet, but there has been designed and built for it a lattice-steel lantern-top which will carry it far higher. William Van Alen's Chrysler Building is to reach 1030 feet unless he has some sort of collapsible and extensible top of which we know nothing. Meanwhile, ex-Governor Smith announces that the Empire State Building, to be built on the old Waldorf site, is to be eighty-five stories with a tower reaching 1,100 feet, as designed by Shreve, Lamb & Harmon.

Tuesday, November 19.—Samuel Yellin over from Philadelphia, entertaining a luncheon-table at The League—Magonigle, Oliver Reagan, Hammer, the sculptor, Frederick G. Frost, and myself. Told us of an order recently received from some one who wanted "some hand-forged wrought-iron work made out of aluminum, with satin finish." Also, another from a woman decorator, enclosing a crude sketch. To make the latter more intelligible she had added a note: "These bars to be twisted, like candy." Yellin wrote back asking whether she had not made a mistake in the address; twisted candy being made in Atlantic City.

Thursday, November 21.—Earl H. Reed, Jr., in from Chicago—forerunner of the Holabird & Root hegira. At a dinner attended by some eighty architects, held at The Architectural League, the firm of Holabird & Root was signally honored in recognition of its notable contributions to present-day American architecture. Raymond Hood presided, introducing Ralph Walker, who expressed New York's tribute to the Chicago firm; Earl Reed, who presented the Chicago background of this young-old firm; James Monroe Hewlett, who expressed a national appreciation of work that is pointing a way in our present architectural trend; Kenneth Murchison, who, as usual, added the leaven of his inimitable humor. John Holabird replied for the firm, introducing Messrs. John Root, Gilbert Hall, Cabeen, Carlson, and Hopkins. After dinner, the whole company adjourned to the exhibition room up-stairs, where we were privileged to see what is undoubtedly the finest architectural exhibition New York has seen in many years. What appeared in the exhibition will be found in these pages.

CONTACTS

DEVOTED TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE BUSINESS SIDE
OF ARCHITECTURE AND ITS RELATION TO THE INDUSTRIES

Revising New York's Building Code

JOHN LOWRY, chairman of the committee formed by The Merchants' Association, New York City, at the request of Mayor Walker, to draft a proposed new building code, has made public some of the important findings of the subcommittees of engineers chosen to make a tentative draft of those portions of the new code dealing with structural steel and iron and minimum loads. The findings represent the joint conclusions of the Subcommittee on Structural Steel and Iron, headed by F. A. Burdett, well-known construction engineer, and the Subcommittee on Materials, Loads, and Stresses, headed by R. H. Shreve, of Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, architects.

Mr. Lowry explained the recommendations made by subcommittees in the following statement:

"The principles which have guided the subcommittees in their work have been:

"1. To make room in the new code for developments in the manufacture and use of structural steel and iron since the present code was prepared fifteen years ago, and to take advantage of the discoveries of scientific research in that period.

"2. To make more liberal the provisions governing the physical properties of building materials, to make more stringent the inspection of their use and to secure better and cheaper building by putting premiums upon good designing rather than by setting low standards and compelling all designers, good, bad, and indifferent, to live down to them.

"One outstanding recommendation is that the unit stress upon which the design of steel structures is based shall be brought into line with the practice in practically every large city in the country by being increased from 16,000 to 18,000 pounds per square inch. The 16,000-pound limit was set almost forty years ago when the use of structural steel was in its infancy and its quality was much less uniform and its properties less known than to-day. Evidence of the conservatism of the committee in this respect is found in the fact that New York subways for many years have been designed to bear 20,000-pound stresses and many railroad bridges, subject to far greater shocks and stresses than any buildings, are designed up to 26,000 pounds.

"Another recommendation which will bring joy, not only to prospective builders and property-owners, but also to the general public, which has long suffered from the infernal din of riveting-machines, is the recommendation that welding be permitted under strict regulations for the erection of steel structures. The committee is absolutely convinced that welding is a sound and effective method for erecting steel structures, but at the same time recognizes that the number of engineers and mechanics acquainted with the properties and methods of welding is such as to make the personal element in its use of much greater importance than in riveting. The provisions for the use of welding, therefore, give the superintendents of building wide discretion in permitting use of the process.

"Everybody realizes that the total pressure of wind against our tall skyscrapers is enormous, but few people realize that research and experience since the present code was drawn up have shown that the theories upon which its provisions were based were erroneous and that the requirement in the present code that designers allow for a pressure of 30 pounds per square foot of exposed surface from the ground to the top of the structure is excessive. In accordance with the knowledge gained by the most modern research, the committee recommends that for ordinary buildings below 100 feet in height, wind pressure may be neglected and that for buildings over 100 feet in height the assumed wind pressure shall be 20 pounds per square foot of exposed surface from the top of the building down to the 100-foot level, but that this pressure must all be taken up in the frame of the building instead of being at least partially taken up in the masonry walls, as is often the case under the present code.

"Recognizing the part which special alloy and high carbon steels are beginning to play in building construction, the committee recommends that the way be cleared for the use of such special steels as rapidly as their qualities can be ascertained, and makes specific recommendations for the use of silicon and nickel steels, already on the market.

"The outstanding recommendations of the committee in respect to the minimum loads which buildings must be designed to carry remove some of the illogical provisions of the present code and recognize the necessity for changes in other directions brought about by the development of automobile traffic and the erection of buildings with large floor areas to be subdivided at the wish of tenants after erection of the main structure has been completed.

"The present code requires an allowance of 40 pounds per square foot on floors for residence purposes, 75 pounds for classrooms and other places of instruction, 100 pounds for places of assembly or public purposes, 60 pounds for office-building floors, and 120 pounds for any other purposes. These requirements have imposed many illogical hardships upon buildings of all kinds.

"The recommendations of the committee are for 40 pounds per square foot in private dwellings, and for bedroom floors, private and ward floors in hospitals, dormitories, and similar occupancies; 50 pounds for office floors (with provisions for concentrated loads); 60 pounds for classrooms, aisles, churches, museums, and such buildings; 70 pounds for theatres and assembly-halls with fixed seats; and 100 pounds for aisles, corridors, public space in hotels and public buildings, theatres, balconies, grandstands, stairways, and exits of passageways wherever crowds of people are likely to assemble.

"Recognition is likewise given to the wide variation in loads upon the floors of commercial or industrial occupancies. It is accordingly recommended that the minimum requirement in the design for floors used for display and sale of light merchandise or for incidental factory work, for stables and garages for pleasure cars only, be 75 pounds. For factories, wholesale stores, storage, and library stack rooms, the minimum design recommended is 120 pounds. For general garages the beams, columns, and girders must be designed to carry 120 pounds and the floor construction 175 pounds in order to care for the great concentration of weight on the wheels of heavily loaded trucks. With the same idea in mind, it is recommended that trucking space within the limits of a building and the portions of sidewalks or driveways leading to such trucking spaces be designed to carry concentrated loads of at least 24,000 pounds and 300 pounds uniformly distributed. Some further reduction in the assumed live load for designing of columns, piers, walls, foundations, trusses, and girders, in accordance with the accepted engineering practice, is also recommended. The designers will be required to allow for 100 per cent of the live load on the roof, 85 per cent on the top floor, and 5 per cent less on each successive lower floor down to a minimum of 50 per cent, but in determining the areas of footings the full dead loads plus the live loads with reductions figured on this basis must be taken."

What Glass Is Best for My Factory?

[*Part II. The first part appeared last month*]

By H. S. Jacoby

Chief Engineer, The H. K. Ferguson Co.

[*Illustrations by courtesy of "Ferguson Cross Section"*]

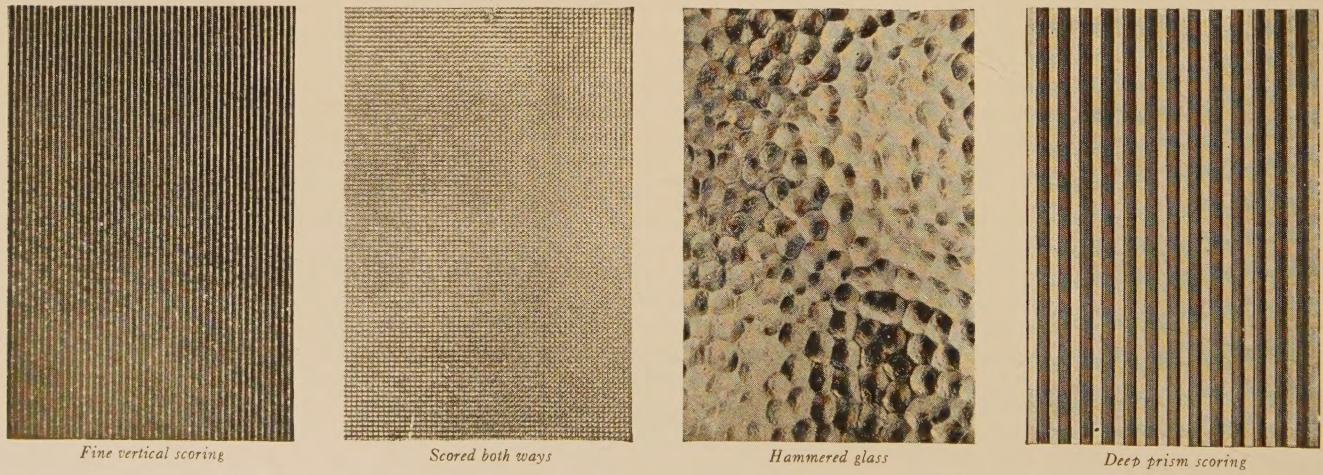
CLEANING is by far the most important factor in daylight illumination, for no matter how well the building is planned, the windows cannot function if they are not kept clean. In an interesting series of tests conducted in 1926 by W. C. Randall and Allen J. Martin it was found that glass in a vertical position, after six months' exposure to dirty atmosphere, has a transmission co-efficient of 0.436. The accumulation increases about in proportion to the inclination of the sash from the vertical. These tests also showed that dirt gathers two or three times faster on the inside than on the outside of the building. A definite schedule of cleaning is obviously necessary, with two washings on the inside for one on the outside.

In plants where such a schedule is maintained, the importance of having glass that can be cleaned easily is appreciated. In order to obtain come comparative data on the cleaning of several types of glass, we recently made a test on the samples of glass mentioned above. These samples, at the time of the test, had been exposed for about six months on the roof of a building within a few hundred feet of a railroad, and all had a considerable accumulation of soot and dust.

A clean, moistened cloth was rubbed forcibly twice over a portion of each pane of glass. A comparison of the results showed the following:

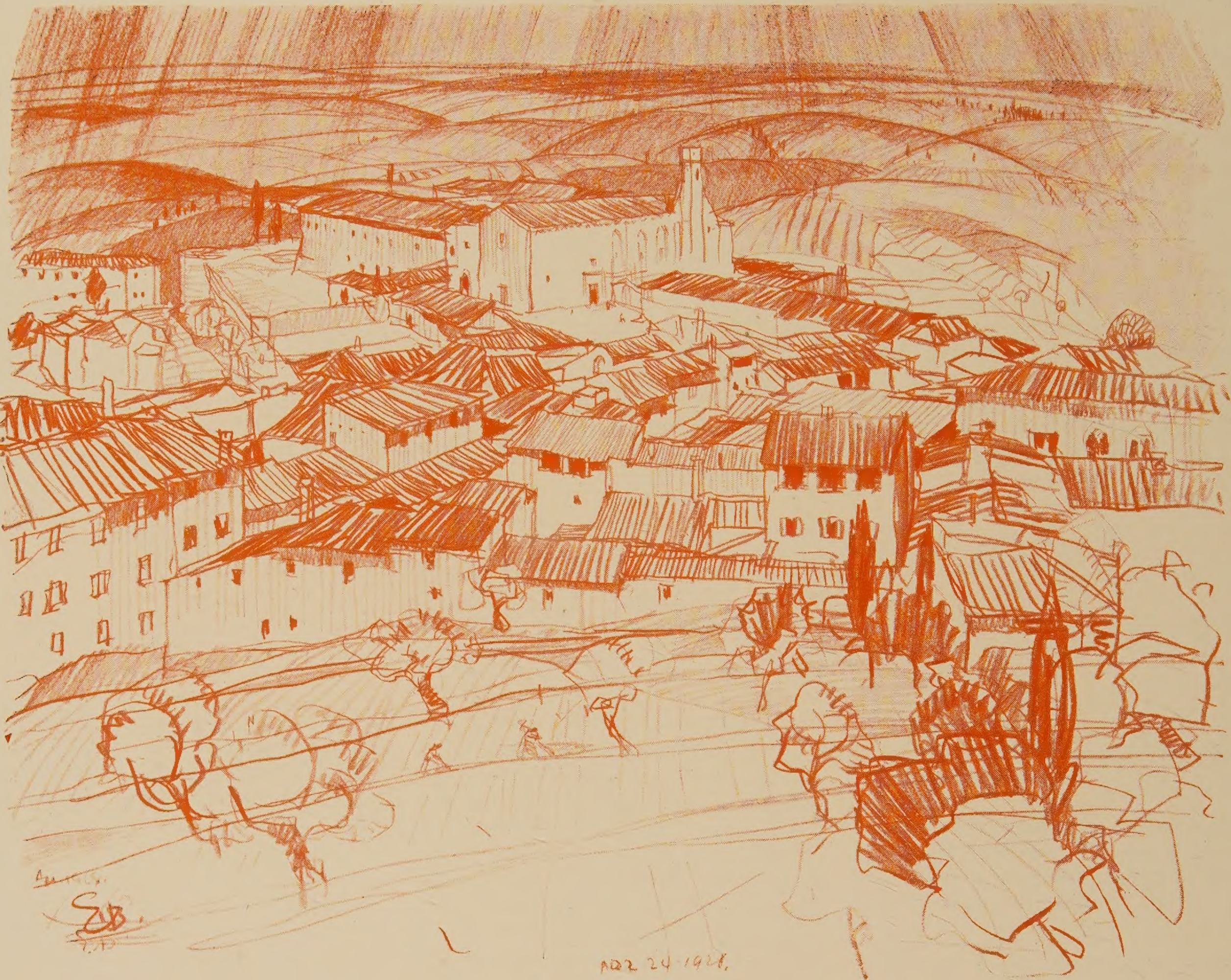
1. Smooth glass — practically clean.
2. Hammered glass—nearly the same; a small amount remained in dents.
3. Scored glass—becomes increasingly difficult to clean as the scoring becomes deeper or more complex in pattern.

We also have found that, in most cases, it is well to glaze windows with the textured surface on the outside. The windows in monitors, sawtooth sash, and skylights can be reached easily from runways or portable scaffolds and water can be used freely. The smooth surface on the inside can be cleaned quickly with a moistened cloth with a minimum of interruption of workmen within the building.



Fine vertical scoring *Scored both ways* *Hammered glass* *Deep prism scoring*

Types of figured glass in common use for factory windows



San Gimignano
From the drawing (12½ x 16 *inches) in sanguine*
by Ernest Born

ARCHITECTURE
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS